

THE
ALBION QUEENS;

OR, THE DEATH OF
MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.

A
TRAGEDY.

BY JOHN BANKS.

ADAPTED FOR
THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,
AS PERFORMED AT THE
THEATRES-ROYAL,
DRURY-LANE, AND COVENT-GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOKS,

By Permission of the Managers.

"The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation."

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ALBION QUENIN

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

BY JOHN BARKER

THEATRE ROYAL
DE GRUYLAND, AND COURT-GARDEN

REPRODUCED FROM THE ORIGINAL

LONDON

Printed by the University of London Press
for the Trustees of the British Museum
in the year 1881

W. 1881

JOHN BANKS.

OF this gentleman the particular history is not known. Thus much however is noted, that he was an Attorney at Law, and of the Society of NEW INN. That falling out with a profession which he most probably deemed disreputable and dry, he became a dramatic writer by chance, and continued so from necessity.—To such a claim how frequently have the *pure* springs of poetry welled forth with fertilizing plenty in their flow; and how frequently, on the other hand, have they issued contaminated by dirt, and no more profitable than

“ The green mantle of the standing pool.”

He produced the following tragedies :

<i>Rival Kings,</i>	- - -	1677.
<i>Destruction of Troy,</i>	-	1679.
<i>Virtue Betray'd,</i>	- -	1682.
<i>Island Queens,</i>	- - -	1684.
<i>Unhappy Favourite,</i>	-	1685.
<i>Innocent Usurper,</i>	- -	1694.
<i>Cyrus the Great,</i>	- -	1696.

By the fourth and fifth of these compositions he is now occasionally remembered.

As a writer, if he be considered with reference to the excitement of *feeling*, he certainly possesses strong claims, but the causes of this effect must be sought after in circumstances foreign both from his sentiment and his diction.

THE ALBION QUEENS.

CALLED originally the Island Queens, was among the few tolerable pieces to which originally licences were refused. The author, however, printed it

“ To shame the rogues.”

and upon the stage it at length found its way.

The title tells all that can be known from the play—and this, where surprise is meant to be excited, is a ground of strong objection to historical dramas.

The *ALBION QUEENS* in diction is turgid and incorrect; the flights of *BANKS* are the frenzies of fancied sublimity, soaring among the comets of irregular imagination.

Much of his exuberant bombast is retrenched in the representation. The noisy declamation of the ranting tragedian has still an ample field to

“ Confound the ignorant, and amaze, indeed,

“ The very faculties of eyes and ears.”

The characters of both these queens seem to be at length clearly understood. Abilities of the first

class at that time were the qualifications of both—but a **GOOD WOMAN** would conceive it a prophana-
tion to have it said, her heart was not better than
either that of the one or the other.

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PROLOGUE.

*WITH farce and sound too long you have been teaz'd,
Tho' some are with such wretched joys most pleas'd;
But we, this night, in other paths shall move,
That lead to honour, innocence, and love:
A queen distress'd, to touch the ladies' eyes,
A noble prince, that for her beauty dies;
A British queen, lamenting their sad fate,
And mourning over the unfortunate.
Who is there here, that could so cruel be,
As not to mourn at their sad tragedy?
To see such honour and such beauty fall,
And England's queen mourn at their funeral.
Our noble Britons, tho' for arms renown'd,
Have for the fair a tender pity found;
And in the midst of slaughter still took care
Not to destroy, but guard the tender fair.
Then let this night your courages be seen,
And guard the British and the Albion Queen.*

Dramatis Personae.

COVENT-GARDEN.

Men.

Duke of NORFOLK,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Wroughton.
DAVISON,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Lestrangle.
MORTON,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Fearon.
CECIL,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Hull.
GIFFORD,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Thompson,

Women.

Queen ELIZABETH,	-	-	-	Mrs. Jackson.
MARY Queen of Scots,	-	-	-	Mrs. Hartley.
DOWGLAS, the Page,	-	-	-	Mrs. Bulkley.

Ladies, Gentlemen, Guards, &c.



THE
ALBION QUEENS.

ACT I. SCENE I.

CECIL *and* DAVISON *discovered.*

Cecil.

REMEMBER, Davison, thou rising star!
Who took thee from thy lowness, made thee shine
A living monument of thy mistress' favour;
“Then plac'd thee on this height, whence to look
down,
“Men will appear like birds or insects to thee:”
Remember too, “thou now art in a sphere
“Where princes to their favours set no bounds,
“And their rewards, though large and bottomless,
“Yet” statesmen have no mean betwixt
The extremest pinnacle of height and ruin.

Dav. Wisest and justest that in courts e'er dwelt,
Great oracle of Britain, prince of statesmen,
Whom men nor angels scarce can praise enough!
“Nor divine Plato ever spoke like you;

“ Plato, on whose sweet lips the muses sung,
“ And bees distill’d their honey in his cradle.”

Cec. No more ; ’tis worse than death for me to hear
A fawning cringer or submissive praiser.
I should suspect thee, did I not believe
Thou art as far beyond a sycophant,
As I’m above the reach of flattery.

20

Thou art my equal now, nay more, my friend ;
Thou art an honest man, “ of parts, a compound
“ That I have chosen ’mongst the race of men,
“ To make a phœnix in the court.”

Dav. The pow’rs above, the strongest guard of
kings,

Still place such men about our royal mistress.”

Cec. But now especially she needs their aid.

“ Now, when the madness of the nation’s grown
“ To such a height, ’tis to be fear’d. Death walks
“ In masquerade, in strange and many shapes :
“ The court, that was the planet that should guide us,
“ Is grown into eclipse with these confusions ;
“ Fears, jealousies and factions crowd the stage :
“ Two queens, the like was never seen before,
“ By different arts oppose each other’s interest ;”
Our virgin constellation shines but dim,
Whilst Mary, Scotland’s queen, that northern star,
Tho’ in a prison, darts her rival light.

Dav. The champions of her faction are not few ;
Men of high birth and titles plead her cause, 41
’Mongst whom, the gallant duke of Norfolk’s chief,
A prince that has no equal in his fame,

“ A man of power and wealth, to be reclaim’d,
 “ For his own sake, as well as for the queen’s :”
 And should he plunge himself too deep in this,
 England may chance to lose the best of men.

Cec. The queen’s peculiar safety be thy care ;
 Therefore the secretary’s place be thine ;
 “ In which high post, as from a perspective,
 “ Thou mayst discover all her foreign foes,
 “ And home conspiracies, how dark soe’er.”
 But most of all, let Mary be thy fear,
 And what thou hear’st inform me of: I’ll act
 But in thy shape : be thou my proxy still.

Dav. Not Cromwell ever trod with so much care
 The subtle steps of the most famous Wolsey,
 As I the dictates of the wiser Burleigh——
 The Scottish regent yesterday arriv’d,
 With new discover’d plots to accuse his queen : 60
 And since, (to poise these heavy articles)
 The Duke of Norfolk is from Mary come,
 And both are to have audience strait——Behold
 The man I speak of.

Cec. Wait you on the queen. [Exit Dav.]

Enter NORFOLK.

Your Grace is welcome from the queen of Scotland.
 How fares that sad and most illustrious pattern
 Of all misfortunes.

“ *Nor.* Dost thou pity her ?
 “ Oh, let me fly, and hold thee to my bosom,
 “ Closer, and far more dear than ever bride

“ Was held by hasty bridegroom in his arms!

“ *Cec.* My lord, you make me blush.

Nor. “ Should the hyena thus bemoan,

“ And thus the neighbouring rocks but echo him,

“ My queen, I would devour the precious sound,

“ And thus embrace him from whose lips it came,

“ Tho’ wide and gaping as the mouth of hell.”

My lord, I came to seek you; I’ve a secret

T’ unfold, which, while I keep it, weighs me down,

And when ’tis out, I fear it will undo me. 81

Cec. Then hold it in your breast; let me not know
What is not fit for you to speak, nor me to hear.

Nor. Now, only now’s the time; the traitor,
Morton,

The false, usurping regent, is return’d,

With all the magazine of hell about him.

The queen, my lovely Albion Queen’s in danger;

And if thou wilt not strait advise thy friend,

Mary’s undone, and Norfolk is no more.

Cec. What is’t, my lord?

Nor. First wear the looks of mildness,

Such as forgiving fathers do to sons:

Yet ’tis no treason, unless love be treason.

Cec. Out with’t, my lord.

Nor. *Wilt thou forgive my bold aspiring hopes*

If I confess I love the queen of Scotland?

Cec. Ha, love her! “ how?

“ *Nor.* How should she be beloved,

“ But as mild saints do to their altars bow,

“ And human patriarchs kiss the copes of angels?

“ *Cec.* Love her ! for what ? ” 101

Nor. Not for a crown, I swear.

Oh, hadst thou seen her in that plight as I did,
And hadst been Alexander, thou hadst kneel'd,
Thrown all thy globes and sceptres at her feet,
And given a crown for ev'ry tear she shed !

Cec. I dare not hear you out.

Nor. You must ; you shall ;

Nor let your ears be deaf alone, nice statesman !

“ And see yon chrystal champion o'er our heads,

“ Throng'd with immortal warriors to her aid,

“ Whose voices, louder than the breath of thunder,

“ And swifter than the winds, proclaim ” to “ earth

“ Bright ” Mary's wrongs and my eternal love.

Cec. My lord, you've said too much ; I dare not
hear you.

Nor. Is pitying the distress'd, and loving her
Whom none but envy hates, a crime ?

Cec. You would not marry her ?

Nor. Not marry her !

Yes, tho' she stood on *Ætna's* sulphurous brink, 120

Tho' its dread mouth ran o'er with liquid fire,

“ And mounting flames higher than *Phœbus* shot,”

I'd swim the burning lake to make her mine.

Cec. For pity, recollect your banish'd reason ;

Consider what you've said ; it must undo you :

“ The danger's greater far than I can feign.”

Do you not know that's she's accus'd of treason ?

That for the royal crown our mistress wears

She yet stands candidate, against all force,

And hopes to snatch it from her rightful head?

Nor. By those eternal rays that bless the world,
'Tis malice foul, as that bright orb is clear.

Oh, Cecil, tell me what thou truly think'st!

"Thou hast a soul with shining wisdom crown'd,

"Whose virtuous honest steps whoever tracks,

"May challenge to be blest: Oh, tell me then!"

Can Scotland's queen with such a guilt be stain'd?

Cec. I dare not utter every thought that pains me,
Nor can I longer with my oath dispense,
An oath that charges me, for life, to hold 140
No dangerous secret from the queen—Farewel;
Repent, my lord, and urge this thing no more;
For 'twould be fatal, should our mistress know it.

Nor. The queen must know it, you shall tell her
too;

"Therefore I came, that thou shouldst intercede,"

You, from whose lips the queen takes nothing ill.

Cec. Not for the crown she wears, would I acquaint
her.

Beware ambition, sir;

The queen has jealousy to give't a name,

Disloyalty, ambition is the least.

Nor. Rash man! thou wrong'st the faithfull'st of
her subjects;

I'd touch a scorpion rather than her sceptre:

Her proud regalias are but glittering toys,

And the least word, a smile from Scotland's queen,

Is worth whole pyramids of royal lumber.

We only ask for love and liberty:

Give us but these, we'll quit her all the rest;
For where love reigns so absolute as here,
There is no room for any other thought.

Cec. My lord, consider what you'd have me say—
I dare not speak nor think of it—Farewel.

Nor. Tell her, or, by my desperate love, I swear,
“ I'll shout it in her ears, were she hemm'd in
“ With basilisks, or were she queen of furies ;
“ Love, mighty love, should lead me and protect me.
“ And by those powers that pity the distress'd,
“ If she'll not hear me,” I'll proclaim yet louder,
And trumpet to the world the hated sound
Of royal Mary's wrongs. *[Going.*

Cec. My lord, my lord, come back ; to save your
life,
(For nought but death can follow such a rashness)
Restrain your passion but a few short moments,
And I'll acquaint her favourite, Leicester, with it.
'Twill be more welcome from his mouth than mine ;
Him I will arm with reason for your sake,
As shall the least incense the queen's displeasure.

*Queen ELIZABETH, MORTON, DAVISON, women,
gentlemen, guards, all discovered at the throne.*

Behold she appears ; the Scottish regent too.

Nor. Confusion seize him !

Cec. Besure, my lord,
Whate'er you see, and hear, contain yourself.

Qu. El. Alas, my lords ! when will you cease com-
plaining ?

And when shall this poor bosom be at rest?

To see you still thus persecute my soul,

My cousin, sister, every thing that's dear;

"No, rather bury me beneath the centre,

"Or, by some magic, turn me into stone;

"Men fix me like a statue, high as Atlas,

"Round me such gaping monsters as yourselves,

"And underneath be this inscription written,

"Lo, this was once the curs'd Elizabeth,

"The queen of wolves and tygers, not of men.

Nor. What's this I hear, 'twas some immortal
spoke.

"Down all ye stars, and every gaudy planet,

"And with your lambent brightness crown her head."

Mor. The parliament of Scotland, mighty queen,
(Begging protection of their infant king)
Have sent me to your Majesty.

Qu. El. What king, what queen have you, but royal
Mary?

I'll hear no more; go home, and tell your masters,
And the crown'd property, your cradle prince, 200
That here his mother, Mary, shall be own'd
His queen, and absolute, while I am so.

Mor. Most gracious queen——

Qu. El. You shall be heard—My lord, [*To Nor.*
You're welcome, welcome, as you most deserve;
The noblest subject, and the bravest friend
That e'er adorn'd a throne—How does the queen?
How fares my excellent and royal sister?
Oh, quickly tell me!

Nor. Desolate she is :

Alas, I tremble, fearing 'tis a crime
To stab your ears with such a doleful accent!
“ Could I draw half that pity from your majesty,
“ As she extorted from the prison walls,
“ Then she might hope; for they would echo her,
“ And sometimes weep at the relation.”

Mor. I beg your royal hearing, now, before
The duke has charm'd you with a syren's story,
By the impartial right of embassies,
And justice, that still waits upon your throne, 220
I humbly claim first to be heard.

Qu. El. You shall.

Say what you please, my lord, you have my leave;
Beware there 'scape no malice from your tongue.

Mor. So thrive my hopes, as there is nought but
truth,

And grounds most just in what shall be alledg'd.
Our queen, most mighty princess, Europe knows,
Has long been wrapp'd in such a cloud of crimes,
That have eclips'd the lustre of a crown.

Who sees into her life——

Qu. El. My lord, I do command you cease; “ or if
“ You speak one word again to blot your queen,
“ I shall suspect, as all the world has done,
“ You had a hand in that vile regicide :
“ Why were the traitors else too black to name,
“ Suppos'd by all contrivers of the murder,
“ By you protected from the cry of justice ?”
If you have nought else to say, be dumb for ever.

Nor. Let justice now be silent, whilst from high
Astrea looks, and wonders at her oracle. [*Aside.*

Mor. Your Majesty must give me leave to speak,
And plead the right of nations for my guard——
Your subject I am not.

Nor. Audacious traitor!

Mor. If innocent, why is she then a prisoner?
If guilty, why against the law of nature,
And clamours of a kingdom, your ally,
Do you bar the gates of justice, and secure her?

Qu. El. To such a daring insect as thyself
I give no other answer, but my will.
But as thou represent'st a power above thee,
I tell thee, proud ambassador, 'tis false;
My throne's an altar with soft mercy crown'd,
Where both yourselves and monarch may be bless'd,
And all your wrongs be equally redress'd.
“At home was she not scandal'd and betray'd?
“Nor dignity, nor tender sex was weigh'd;
“She flew to me for refuge from a crown,
“As safer in my castle than her throne.”

Mor. Nay, then, I will be heard. 260
If your confederate's danger will not wake you,
Then you own kingdom's must. Behold a letter,
By Navus wrote, and sign'd with her own hand,
Sent to the noblemen, her friends in Scotland,
Wherein she does asperse your majesty
With treachery, and breach of promise to her;
But bids them be of courage, and expect her;
For now she is assur'd of other means,

Some mighty man, your subject, by whose aid,
She hopes to be releas'd, and suddenly.

Nor. Most wise, discerning princess, did you hear?
“Hear this bold man, how loud he mouths at
princes?”

The base, degenerate coward, dreading you,
Now turns his back, but worries still a queen.

Qu. El. Let him be heard.

Nor. Oh, stop the traitor's mouth!
Hear not a monarch by her rebel stain'd:
By that bright throne of justice which you fill,
'Tis false, 'tis forg'd, 'tis Lucifer's invention.

Qu. El. My lord—— 280

Mor. We've letters too, and witness,
To prove that Allen, Inglesfield, and Ross,
Have bargain'd with the Pope and King of Spain,
To excommunicate her son and you,
And give a resignation of both crowns,
To that most catholic tyrant for his service.

Qu. El. Defend me, powers! this is a mountain
treason!

Nor. Prodigious monster?

Qu. El. Are you not amaz'd?
My guard, my faithful Cecil, “more my friend!
“Thou art my Delphos! to whose oracle,
“Where should I have recourse, but unto thee,
“Whose bosom is my guide, whose breast my
council?”

What think you now, my lord?

Nor. 'Tis all conspiracy.

Cec. Rest, and refer this matter to your council :
Something may be in this, but more design.

Mor. If all's not true, I'll give my body up
To torments, to be rack'd, and die a villain :/
Or stand the test with any he that dares. 300

Nor. Quick, let me take him at his word——
Oh, that I had thee in some desert wild,
As far from man as thou art from humanity,
“ Where none could save thee but thy fellow-monsters !
“ I'd crush the treason from thy venom'd throat,
“ As I would do its poison from a toad.

“ *Mor.* My lord——

“ *Qu. El.* My lord of Norfolk, you are to blame.

“ *Nor.*” I beg your Majesty to grant the combat ;
And I, as champion for that injur'd saint,
I, Thomas Norfolk, with this arm, will prove
That Mary, queen of Scotland, is abus'd,
“ That she is innocent, and all is forg'd,
“ Nay, 'till I have made him own to all the world,
“ That he's not born of noble blood, but that
“ Some ruffian stept into his father's place,
“ And more than half begot him.

“ *Mor.* Gracious queen——”

Qu. El. If Norfolk can so suddenly forbear
That noble temper was so long admir'd, 320
And trample o'er so rudely, in my presence,
The dignity of crowns and law of nations ;
I can as soon recall the lavish bounties,
That made this mad-man equal with myself ;
Nay, were you duke of all your fancy'd world,

Your head as high as your aspiring thoughts——
Confess 'tis frenzy, so go home and rest;
But take this caution, sir, along with you——
Beware what pillow 'tis you rest upon.

Nor. If to proclaim the innocence of her
Who has no liberty to do't herself,
Be such a crime, take then this life and honours,
They're more your majesty's than his that wears them;
But while I live, "I'll shout it to the skies,"
I will aloud proclaim,

"Whilst echo answers from this ball of earth,"
Queen Mary's wrong'd, queen Mary's innocent.

Qu. El. And must I endure all this?
Hence from my sight, be gone, be banish'd ever.

Nor. I will obey your anger; but, alas! 340
You'll hear my message first from the sad princess.

Qu. El. What said she?

Nor. Here is a letter from that guilty fair one; X
She bid me thus present it on my knees.

Qu. El. Before I read it, you may speak, my lord.

"*Nor.* Mark but the superscription—is't not to
"Her dearest sister, queen Elizabeth?"

"*Qu. El.* It is."

Nor. But had you seen her write it, with what love,
How with a sigh she perfum'd every word,
Fragrant as eastern winds, or garden breezes,
That steal the sweets of roses in their flights:
On every syllable she rain'd down pearls,
And said, instead of gems, she sent you blessings;
For other princely treasure she had none.

Qu. El. Alas, what mean'st thou, Norfolk?

Nor. Then she sigh'd, and said,
Go to the queen, perhaps upon her throne;
Tell her, mine is an humble floor, my palace
An old dark tower, that threat'ning dares the sky, 360
And seems at war with heaven to keep day out:
For eighteen years of winter, I ne'er saw
The grass embroider'd o'er with icy spangles,
Nor trees majestic in their snowy robes;
Nor yet in summer, how the fields were clad,
And how soft nature gently shifts the scene,
From heavy vestment to delightful green.

Qu. El. Oh, duke, enough, thy language stabs my
soul.

Nor. No feather'd choristers of chearful note,
Salute my dusky gate to bring the morn,
But birds of frightful omen. "Screech owls, bats,
"And ravens, such as haunt old ruin'd castles,
"Make no distinction here 'twixt sun and moon,
"But join their clattering wings with their loud
creaks,"

That sing hoarse midnight dirges all the hours.

Qu. El. Oh, horror! Cecil, stop thy ears and mine.
Now, cruel Morton, is she guilty now?
She cannot be ambitious of my crown;
For though it be a glorious thing to sight,
Yet, like a glittering, gaudy snake, it sits, 380
Wreathing about a prince's tortur'd brow:
And, oh, it has a thousand stings as fatal.
Thou hast no more to say?

“ *Nor.* I found this mourning excellence alone.
 “ She was asleep, not on a purple bed,
 “ A gorgeous palate, but upon the floor,
 “ Which a mean carpet clad, whereon she sat,
 “ And on a homely couch did lean her head :
 “ Two winking tapers, at a distance stood ;
 “ For other light ne’er bless’d that dismal place,
 “ Which made the room look like some sacred urn,
 “ And she, the sad effigies of herself.

“ *Qu. El.* No more; alas! I cannot hear thee out—”
 Pray, rise my lord.

Nor. Oh, ne’er till you have pity.
 “ Her face and breast I might discover bare ;
 “ And looking nearer, I beheld how tears
 “ Slid from the fountains of her scarce clos’d eyes,
 “ And every breath she fetch’d turn’d to a sigh.

“ *Qu. El.* Oh, I am drown’d! I’m melted all to
 pity. 400

“ *Nor.* Quickly she wak’d, for grief ne’er rested
 long,

“ And starting at my sight, she blush’d and said,
 “ You find me full of woe; but know, my lord,
 “ ’Tis not for liberty nor crowns I weep,
 “ But that your queen thinks me her enemy.”

Qu. El. “ My breast, like a full prophet, is o’er
 charg’d,

“ A sea of pity rages to get out,
 “ And must have way.”—Rise, Norfolk, run, haste all,
 Fly, with the wings of darting meteors, fly
 “ Swift as the merciful decrees above

“ Are glided down the battlements of bliss :

“ Quick, take your queen’s own chariot ; take my
love,

“ Dear as a sister’s, nay, a lover’s heart,”

And bring this mourning goddess to me straight ;

“ Fetch me this warbling nightingale, who long

“ In vain has sung, and flutter’d in her cage ;

“ And lay the panting charmer in my breast ;”

This heart shall be her gaoler, and these arms her
prison,

And thou, kind Norfolk, see my will obey’d.

Nor. *I fly to execute.*

[Exit.

“ Oh, run, and execute the queen’s commands, 421

“ Prepare her golden coach, and snow white steeds,

“ The pattern of that innocence they carry.

[Exit second Gent.

“ And fly more swift than Venus drawn by doves.

“ Should all the clouds pour down at once upon you,

“ Make your quick passage through the falling ocean :

“ Not the dread thunder, let it stop, nor lightning stay
you.”

Mor. Madam——

Qu. El. No more, you shall have justice, sir,
The accuser, and the accus’d, shall both have justice.

Why was I born to empire, to a crown,

Now when the world is such a monster grown !

When summer freezes, and when winter springs,

When nature fades, and loyalty to kings !

“ Nor. When first the fox beheld the awful lion,

“ He trembl’d, couch’d, and saw his lord, with fear ;

“Kings once were gods, but now like men appear;
 “’Tis for the royal fur, they hope to win,
 “The ermin might be safe, but for the skin:
 “If kings have any fault, ’tis but the name, 440
 “And not who wears it, but the crown’s to blame.”

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II. SCENE I.

NORFOLK *solus.*

“SHOUT the loud world, sound all the vast creation,”
 Let proud Augusta, clad in robes of triumph,
 Through her glad streets, with golden trumpet sound,
 “And echo to the ocean that she comes:”
 Maria comes, proclaim it to the world,
 “Let the four winds from distant corners meet,
 “And on their wings, first bear it into France,
 “Then back again to Edina’s proud walls,
 “’Till victim to the sound th’aspiring city falls.”

Enter MORTON.

Mor. My lord, I come to find you.

Nor. Pardon me;

The mighty joy that has since fill’d my breast,
 “And left no room for other tongues,” has made me
 Forget that you and I were foes.

Mor. And I, my lord——

“Brave spirits should be stirr’d to wrath,
 “As seldom as the centre is with earthquakes;

“ Not like the sea disturb’d with every blast :”
I came to speak with you but as a friend.
Last night when laid to rest, prepar’d for slumber, 20
That gives soft ease to all but sorrowful
And guilty minds, a sudden dread assail’d me——
“ Inspir’d by some superior power that aw’d
“ And stole quick passage to my cruel bosom.”
My barb’rous zeal, for a more barb’rous cause,
Began to slack, whilst true remorse and pity
Surpriz’d my soul, and held it for the queen.

Nor. Oh, may they ever hold possession there !

Mor. They shall ; all she’s accus’d of is no more,
But that she strove to cast her fetters off :
“ The lion, when he’s hunted to the toil,
“ Spares not himself, nor foes within his reach,
“ But wounds his bristly hide, and tears the ground,
“ And all for precious liberty he roars :
“ Freedom, which Heaven and Nature gave to all ;
“ But cruel man, and yet more cruel laws, deny.”
What if some nobleman should be found out,
A subject of this realm, to wed our queen ?
For here are subjects of estate and rank,
May weigh their coronets with princes’ crowns. 40

Nor. Some such there are, if she would think them
worthy.

Mor. She must, and will, she has no other hopes.
“ Steering thus wise in a Sicilian streight,”
Your jealous queen will then be freed from fears
By such a match, who all her reign has dreaded
Her marriage with some prince of France or Spain,

So to convey her title to the crown,
To the worst enemy this nation has.

Nor. Name but the man who dares aspire to be
Her kneeling slave, much more her royal husband?
Say is't not Leicester?

Mor. All but yourself——
Would first have nam'd the duke of Norfolk.

“*Nor.* Ha!

“*Mor.* Wonder not, sir.”

Nor. I ne'er can be ambitious of a throne;
But if I were, I swear to thee, oh, Morton!
I would prefer the lovely Albion Queen,
To crowns, to empire, or ten thousand lives.
Queen, did I say? the name's too great, too distant,
And sounds too mighty for a lover's hopes. 61

Mor. The planets all above, and men below,
Have mark'd you out to be that happy man.

Nor. Oh, were she not a queen,
But born of Sylvan race, her royal seat
Some mossy bank, instead of Scotland's throne:
Under no canopy but some large oak;
“A crook in that bright hand that once a sceptre
sway'd,

“And coronet of flowers her temples wreathing,
“Whilst round her all her bleating subjects fed;”

Glad I would be to dress me like a swain,
Beg from her looks alternately my doom,
Mingle our smiles, and mix our woes together,
Sit by her side, freed from the chains of power,
And never think of curst ambition more.

Mor. Come, come, my lord, “you wrong your
“ hopes to hide

“ This secret from the only man can serve you.

“ I know you love the afflicted queen ; confess,

“ And,” soon as she’s arriv’d, I’ll wait on her,

Fall on my knees, nay, prostrate on the earth, 80

Implore my pardon of that injur’d saint,

And make it my request for all her subjects,

To take you for her husband, and our king.

And for her dower, her crown and liberty.

Nor. By all my shining hopes, if thou art real,

And mak’st us one, as we’re one soul already,

I will reward thee with that crown thou proffer’st,

And thou shalt reign for infant James, and me ;

“ But, if I find thee false——

“ Hear, mighty Vengeance, and aid me with thy
scorpions,

“ Lend me thy surest thunder thus to grasp,

“ Give me the strength and rage of Hercules,

“ That I may take the monster in these hands,

“ And when he proves a traitor, shake his body.”

The queen’s approaching, one of us must part,

It is not fit we should be seen together ;

You will go wait upon the queen of Scotland.

Oh, Morton ! be thou faithful, and be great. [*Exit.*

Mor. Farewel ; greatness I’ll owe unto myself, not
thee.

“ Mary, like a proud fabric, safely stands, 100

“ Supported by great Norfolk as a column ;

“ Saw but this pillar off, the building falls.

“ This hot-brain’d heedless duke, to save the queen,
 “ Runs, blind with love, himself into the gin;
 “ Thus, when the king of beasts, hears his lov’d mate
 “ Roar in the toil, with hopes to free her strait,
 “ Scours to her aid, and meets the self same fate.”

Enter Queen ELIZABETH, CECIL, attendants and guards.

Qu. El. My lord, the queen’s already in our walls,
 And passing through the city to our palace.

Mor. I hope this meeting will be kind and lasting,
 And prove as joyful to your majesty,
 As is our welcome queen to all your subjects.

Qu. El. My lord, what mean you? Who has wel-
 com’d her?

Mor. I mean the shouts, the joyful ring of bells,
 Bonfires, that turn’d the night to shining day,
 Soon as your orders were dispatch’d to bring her.

Qu. El. Were they so much transported at the news?

Mor. No doubt to please your majesty they did it.

Qu. El. It does not please me; why was I not told it?
 “ I would have added water to their flames, 121
 “ Dug up their wharfs, and sluices, at their gates,
 “ To quench their saucy fires.”

Mor. ’Twas ignorance——

Qu. El. ’Twas insolence!

But how behav’d the queen? Inform me, Morton?
 Did she not look as one that came in triumph,
 Deck’d with the spoils of all my subjects hearts?
 Didst thou not read upon her guilty cheeks,

Strugglings, to shew a false dissembl'd grief?

[*Shouts here.*]

Ha ! in my ears ! and at my palace doors,

“ Thus they would dare me, had they forts and canons.”

Mor. This sounds, as if the queen were near.

Enter DAVISON.

Qu. El. Speak, Davison ; what means this shouting ?

Dav. The queen is come ; these thundring acclamations

Proclaim your people's joy, where-e'er she passes.

It was your royal pleasure, I should meet

This wish'd for princess, ere she reach'd the town,

But could not pass it for the gazing throng ;

So numerous, that, had your majesty beheld them, 140

You would have wept, as Xerxes o'er his armies,

To think, perchance, that in a few short years,

None of those god-like creatures would be living.

Qu. El. Thou art mistaken ; for had I been there,

I should have smil'd to hear the giddy rout,

That in one moment will their prince adore ;

And sacrifice the next.

Dav. Mistake me not, nor your kind subjects' loves ;
I hope they did not mean it to offend.

Qu. El. Proceed ; did they not strive to give thee
way ?

Not for my sake, nor for my dignity and place ?

Dav. Alas ! 'twas past their power ! I might as well
Oppose my breast against a gushing torrent,
Or driven the ocean from its deep abode,

As stem the multitude—but mark what follow'd ;
For this was but the curtain to the scene.
You look displeas'd, I doubt I've said too much,
And fear I've done them wrong.

Qu. El. I'll hear ; go on.

Dav. The queen no sooner did appear, but strait
The obedient crowd shrunk back at her command, 161
“ Making a lane to guard on every side ;
“ Not Æolus with his commanding breath,
“ Did the unruly waves so soon control,
“ As she with her mild looks the rout dispers'd.”

Qu. El. 'Tis well ; and what am I, ungrateful people ?

Dav. But when she spoke, they hung like cluster'd
grapes,

And cover'd all her chariot like a vine ;
“ The loaded wheels, thick as the dust they hide,
“ And swarm'd like bees upon her coach's side.
“ Matrons and virgins in her praises sung ;
“ Whilst tuneful bells in grateful changes rung ;
“ All harmony from discord seem'd to flow,
“ And shouts from tops of towers, meet shouts below ;
“ Nurses, when they with joy, her face had seen,
“ Would, pointing to their children, shew the queen :
“ Whilst they (ne'er learn'd to talk) for her would try,
“ And the first word they spoke, would Mary cry.”

Qu. El. 'Tis false ; thou wrong'st my subjects,
They durst not do this ! Durst not, did I say ? 180
My people would not. [Shouts here.
What's this I hear ?

Are these the perjur'd slaves, that at my sight,

Have left their callings, young men left their sports,
“ The old their crutches too would fling away,
“ And halt to see my face ?” The bridegroom at the
altar,

That had his bride by th’ hand, at my approach,
Left the unfinish’d rites to see me pass,
And made his eager hopes wait on his queen.

Dav. And there are millions yet, that so would do.

Qu. El. No, I’m forgot ; a new thing has their hearts :
I am grown stale, as vulgar to the sight,

As sun by day, or moon and stars by night.

Oh, curse of crowns ! oh, curse of regal power !

“ Learn you, that would such pageantry adore,

“ Trust whining saints, the cunning harlot’s tears,

“ And listen when the perjur’d lover swears ;

“ Believe the snake that woman did delude,

“ But never, never trust the multitude. [*Shouts here.*

“ *Cec.* Run, and proclaim the queen’s commands
to all, 200

“ On penalty of death, they cease this shouting.

“ *Qu. El.* No, let them stun me, kill me ; yet, vile
traitors !

“ Ye shall have her ye long for, in my throne ;

“ False queen ! you shall enjoy your sister’s crown ;

“ But it shall be with stings of scorpions guarded ;

“ And a worse plague to thee, than mine is now ;

“ It shall be in the Tower, there thou shalt sing

“ Thy Siren’s song, and let them shout in answer :
do :

“ I’ll teach you how to flatter and betray——

“ Run, seize the queen, like lightning strait obey.

“ [*Offers to go out and comes again.*

“ Where wou’dst thou go? Where would thy fury
drive thee?

“ What has my sister, what has Mary done?

“ Must she be punish’d for my subjects’ crimes?

“ Perhaps she’s innocent of all this joy,

“ And bears the sound with greater pain than I.

“ Where shall I wander? In what place have rest?

“ The cottage floor with verdant rushes strewn,

“ Is easier than a wretched monarch’s throne.

[*Shouts here.*”

Dav. The queen is just on entrance.

Qu. El. Does it please ye?

220

Behold she comes, meet and conduct her in;

Why stay you here? Each do his office strait,

And set her in my place; my crown present her,

And with your hollows echo all the rabble.

The deed is done, that Mary is your queen:

“ But think not to be safe, for when I’m dead,

“ Swift as on dragon’s wings from high I’ll fall,

“ And rain down royal vengeance on you all.”

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Queen MARY, DOWGLAS, two gentlemen, four ladies.

Qu. M. Come, poor remainder of my lost estate,
Once I was served in pomp, had many friends,
And found no blessing in the gaudy crowd;
But now I am beholden to my fate,

Else we do walk enchanted, and this place
Is not Whitehall, but Pawlet prison still.

Qu. M. Lend me your hands, for I am faint and
weary,

My feet too tremble, and methinks the floor
Sinks under them ; and now it fares with me,
Like a poor mariner, that has been condemn'd
To a close bark, a long and tedious voyage,
Who, coming to the shore, scarce feels the ground,
And thinks the earth does like the ship go round.

Dow. Here sit you down a while.

Qu. M. What, in her chair ?

Then she indeed may say I am ambitious ;
Ambitious of her crown, which I am not ;

[*Sits on a stool.*

Now you upon the floor encompass me.

So, this is as it should be, is it not ?

Thus have we oft beguil'd the time at Fotheringay—
Lend me a glass, and pr'ythee tell me truly,
How do I look.

Dow. To see yourself, is strait to banish woe, 280
And make you happy for that day : I am sure
It does your servants when they look on you ;
You are so good, so perfect, and so fair,
Beauty and sorrow, never was so near
In any but in you.

Qu. M. Alas ! thou flatter'st me. [*Reaching the glass.*

Dow. In all the fatal time of your confinement,
You rarely saw yourself ; or, if you did,

'Twas through such dismal clouds of "garb and"
sorrow,

You scarcely knew that visage so adorn'd ;

" But now 'tis hard to tell which strives the most,

" Your dress or beauty to adorn each other. —

" Behold else.

" *Qu. M.* Give it me—ha ! d'ye mock me !

" Who looked in the glass ?

" *Dow.* Madam."

Qu. M. Alas ! these cannot be thy mistress' eyes,
Mine were dim lamps that long ago expir'd,
And quite dissolv'd and quench'd themselves in tears :

" These cheeks are none of mine, the roses look not

" Like tempest-beaten lilies as mine should ; 301

" This forehead is not graven with the darts

" Of eighteen years of sharpest miseries ;

" Nor are these lips like sorrow's blubber'd twins,

" Ne'er smiling, ever mourning, and complaining—"

False glass ! " that flatters, and undoes the fond :"

[*Throws away the glass.*

False beauty ! " may that wretch that has thee, curse
thee,

" And hold thee still detestable as mine."

Why tarriest thou to give me yet more woe :

" The earth will mourn in furrows at the plough,

" Birds, trees, and fields, when the warm summer's
gone.

" Put their worst looks, and sable colours on :

" The sullen streams, when the least tempest blows,



ALBION QUEENS

*North - I'll place you in that proud
imperial chair.*

del. R.

scul. A.

“ Their crystal smoothness in a moment loose ;
 “ But my curst beauty, this malicious charm,
 “ No time, long griefs, nor blasts of envy harm.”

Enter Duke of NORFOLK.

Nor. What do I see, the person or the shadow
 Of the most royal majesty of Scotland !

And these the weeping mourners of her fortune ?

“ Bright as Diana with her starry nymphs, 320
 “ Descending to make fertile sea and land,
 “ T’ enrich the waves, and bless the world with
 plenty.”

Oh, rise ! most charming of all creatures, rise !

“ Or yon bright heavenly roof, that weighs the world,
 “ Will turn the scale, and mount the globe above it.”

Qu. M. Who sees the needy traveller on foot,
 When he approaches to his long’d-for inn,
 Welcom’d, caress’d, and shew’d the fairest room,
 And richest bed to rest his weary limbs ?
 Or who beholds the beggar on his straw,
 Crying for alms, before the rich man’s door,
 And bids him rise ? Go, duke, and shun this wretch ;
 Fly Mary’s face, “ for such and worse is she.”

Nor. Rise, charming excellence ! Or by yourself,
 The greatest oath that I can take,
 “ I’ll bear your precious body in these arms,
 “ (Forgive the sacrilegious violence)”
 I’ll place you in that proud imperial chair,
 “ Beneath whose scornful feet you meekly lie ;
 “ Nay, I would do’t, were this she-tyrant by ; 340

“ Though she stood here, and dar’d me with revenge,
“ I’d seat you in that place in spite of her.”

Qu. M. May all that’s great and good forbid.

Nor. The powers above, and mortals all below,
Would praise me for that deed—Who can behold
England’s bright heiress, queen of France and Scot-
land,

Whose veins thus treasur’d with the sacred blood
“ Of Fergus, and a hundred Albion kings,”
Lie thus neglected, in a state thus mean!
Who can behold it, and at once be loyal?

Qu. M. Oh, tempt me not with thoughts of any state,
But this that I am in; it was a vision,
The world till now was but a dream to me.
When I was great, I always was in danger;
Giddy, and fearful, when I look beneath;
But now with scorn I can see all above me,
Happy in this, that I can fall no lower.

Nor. Oh, say not so, for pity of mankind,
Lest fate descends in battles, plagues and fire,
To scourge the earth for so profane a sight, 360
And treating thus the majesty of queens.

“ Had I the thunder, Nature’s self should wreck,
“ The frightened world should at my burthen groan,
“ Whilst thus I fell with my immortal weight,
“ Thus at your feet, and crush’d its soul away.
“ But as I am Norfolk still, the meanest wretch,
“ Let me dig out of thee a grave, and say,
“ As raving Aristotle to the sea,
“ Since I can’t conquer thee, thou bury me.”

Qu. M. Speak, gallant duke, and shew me if you
can, [Rises.

Where shall the wretched fly to be at rest?

“It was but yesterday I ’scap’d the wreck,

“And now so soon again set out at drift,

“To rocks, wide seas, and vast extended ruin;

“That nothing but a miracle can save me.”

Nor. Oh, could I dare but whisper it in your ear,
Or claim the sacred promise once you made,
Here you should meet that calm repose you want
In Norfolk’s grateful breast.

Qu. M. Oh, name not love!

380

Love always flies the wretched and abandon’d,

And I am both; sorrow has play’d the tyrant;

Plow’d up this once fair field, where beauties grew,

And quite transform’d it to a naked fallow;

That you had once my word ’tis true, but ’twas

When I had hopes to be a queen again;

I thought to give you with some charms a crown

Which you deserve, but now they all are fled,

I am not worth the taking, cease the thought.

Nor. You are above all wealth, all queens to me,
Your glorious head was shadow’d with a crown,

“A brighter body seem’d but coarsly clad

“With robes of majesty, like stars o’er-clouded—

“Those cast away, the cherubim appears,

“Bright as the world was in its infant years;

“Eas’d of this sumpture, take your happy flight,

“The lighter by the load of ponderous crowns,”

You bear the badge of Heaven where'er you go,
And beauty's mine, more worth than all below.

Qu. M. Where shall I fly? 400

Nor. "To Scythia, wilds of beasts.

"Or," any where but this accursed court;
To Scotland fly, where the repenting Morton,
(Whom real pity of your matchless sufferings
Has turn'd a saint) has writ to all the states
To meet, receive you, and approve your choice.

Qu. M. First let my virtue with my mind consult.

Nor. Nay, while we think, we stumble on our graves,
Or prison "else," you know not what the queen,
And your vile foes are now consulting of.

Qu. M. To fly suspected, is to make me guilty:
Yet she condemns, and shuns me like a monster,
Denies what to the meanest criminal she grants.

Nor. A moment will undo us.

"*Qu. M.* Whilst fears, and hopes, to be victorious
strive,

"Like seas with bold contrary winds opprest,

"They rouse the quiet ocean in my breast."

Enter DAVISON and guards.

Dav. The queen, my mistress, to her royal sister,
The wrong'd and beauteous majesty of Scotland,
Sends by her slave, the dearest of all loves, 420
Not such as wanton fickle lovers give,
But such as royal friendship owes to virtue;

She lovingly intreats you would accept
Of this her guard.

Nor. Ha!

Dav. Not as a restraint,
But to protect your life against your foes,
Which still she prizes dearer than her own.
Without are officers prepar'd to wait you
To an apartment nearest to herself.
My lord, it is the queen's command,
You leave this place, and instantly attend her. [*Exit.*

Nor. Immortal Powers, a guard!

Qu. M. Haste, noble duke, prevent her threat'ning
rage.

Plead for yourself—behold I am not worse,
Than when you saw me first at Fotheringay.

Nor. Oh, rigid caution! Virtue too severe!
You have done a cruel justice on yourself,
And quite undone your Norfolk.

Qu. M. Give me your hand; 440
I will be yours, or never be another's,
“That as my heart!” but, oh, most gallant Norfolk!
Some time allow to weigh the nice regards,
Of jealous honour in a prince's breast;
Cruel example, cruel greatness awes
Her sex and monarchs with the hardest laws—
Farewel. [*Exit.*

Nor. Oh, tyrant law! more cruel greatness still;
Man till forbidden knew not what was ill;
And till ambition sow'd the fatal strife,
Husbands were blest, each bride a happy wife;

“ Virtue once reign’d, and then was so renown’d,
“ Valour made kings, and beauty oft was crown’d ;”
Merit did then, much more than interest plead,
The happy pair but lik’d, and soon agreed ;
“ But now love’s bought, and marriage grown a trade,
“ Estate and dower are in the balance weigh’d ;”
Love still was free, till pride got in by stealth,
And ne’er a slave till undermin’d by wealth.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter MORTON and DAVISON.

Morton.

Now, famous Davison, ’tis in your power
To be the genius of our threaten’d nation ;
And the protector of your crown and laws ;
“ A glorious merit offers to espouse you,
“ And make your name in England’s cause renown’d ;”
Your mistress must not see the queen of Scotland,
This you must study to prevent, for ’tis
To give a dagger to a lunatick !
How does she hold her yesterday’s resolve ?

Dav. Just as I fear’d ; for in her bed-chamber,
Early this morn, I found the duke of Norfolk,
Upon his knees petitioning for the queen ;
At first she started, whilst her eyes shot flames,

And bid him in a fury straight begone;
Then, with an elevated tone, she cry'd,
What must I ne'er be kneel'd to, but for her:
"All knees, all hearts, must bend to her alone;
"Whilst I, like the dull slavish animal
"That bore the goddess' image on his back,
"Am worshipp'd only for her." 20

Mor. Said rarely!

Dav. Then on a sudden, call'd him back again,
Blotting a tear that fell in spite of her,
And bid him go to the distress'd poor queen,
Sending her ring, and with it many a sigh;
Tell her, said she, though jealousies of state
Forbid that we should meet; not many days,
Not many hours I am resolv'd to live,
Unless I hold her in these arms for ever.

Mor. Then all my fears again return.

Dav. The duke
Rose from the ground, exalted and inspir'd,
Leaving the queen with Cecil and myself;
But soon on us, presuming to advise her,
She thunder'd, as th' immortals on the giants,
And made us feel what 'twas to war with heaven:
"Then in a rage she darted from her closet,
"And threw the door so hard with such a fury
"(As I have seen her father Harry do)
"That made us tremble." 40

Mor. What would you advise?

Dav. I know not, for she wearies her attendants,

And fain would shake them off; "surveys each
chamber,

"And measures every apartment in the palace

"A hundred times."

I know the cause, and though her soul's too proud,

And would not stoop to see the Scottish queen,

Yet she seeks all occasions out to meet her;

"And therefore loiters like a miser's ghost,

"About the treasure that it lov'd on earth."

Mor. This mighty duke must be lopp'd low, or fall;

"His towering branches are too vast, and high,

"Under whose tops our queen securely lies,

"And mocks the just avenging storms above."

He thinks he's clear'd from all accounts of guilt;

But I have that will set him in arrear,

Ne'er to be paid, and ne'er to be forgiven.

I'll to the duke.

Dav. And I'll go seek the queen.

[*As Davison is going out, Gifford meets him.*

What art thou that has haunted me so long? 60

"Thou look'st as if thou mean'st to draw my picture;

"I saw thee in the presence of the queen,

"Which as I left, thou follow'dst me,

"And still survey'st me with a curious eye.

"What would'st thou with me? Say, what art?"

Gif. A man;

And what indeed is rare in such a place,

A miracle at court; an honest man.

Dav. That were in truth, a wonder.

Gif. I am a priest.

Dav. How dar'st thou shew thy head within these walls?

I'll have thee seiz'd.

Gif. Thou had'st better, if 'twere possible,
The guardian-angel of thy mistress seize:
I'm hir'd to kill the queen.

Dav. Oh, monstrous villain!

Gif. I am no villain, but a scourge to villains.

Dav. Oh, horrid! most unheard of impudence!
Durst thou say this to me that am her servant?

Gif. Because you are, therefore I sought you out;
I came not here to act it, but reveal it: 81
"Hell could not rest, and know it."

Dav. "Thou sayest well;"
What dire companions in this tragedy
Hast thou? Who set you on?

Gif. Oh, they are mighty!
Nor was the queen alone to have felt the blow.

Dav. Is not the queen of Scotland in the plot?
Speak as thy virtue prompts thee, "and the throne,
"Thy innocence, and heaven, be all thy guard."

Gif. I know that for her sake this was contriv'd,
Am witness too she was consenting to it.

Dav. Wert thou alone to act this monstrous treason?

Gif. No; five bold traitors more, beside myself
(Curst that my name should e'er be read for one),
All made of nature's roughest, fiercest mould,
Have enter'd in a damn'd association

"(Start all that's human and divine to her)"

To kill the queen ! to murder majesty,
Their several instruments of fate, in sport, 100
They made the guilt of chance ; to one by lot
A sword fell to his share, the next a gun,
The third a pistol, poison had the fourth,
The fifth chose water for the deed, who was,
If all the rest had fail'd, to have sunk her barge,
Rowing some evening, as her custom is,
From Greenwich : and this dagger was my lot.

Dav. Thou'st gain'd a glorious and immortal credit.

Gif. I can produce what will amaze you worse ;
“ No necromancer ever shew'd the face
“ Of a suspected stealer in a glass,
“ As I” the lively figures of these monsters,
In glorious ostentation of the deed,
Painted on tables, set in gold, with Babington
High in the midst, and in his threat'ning hand,
Grasping the weapon that should kill the queen.

Dav. Oh, villains ! didst thou ever see queen Mary ?

Gif. Yes, and have seen her letters to the Pope,
To the confederates, and to Babington.

Dav. To Babington ! Say ! Does she write to him ?

Gif. To him !—I am the intrusted messenger. 121

Dav. Dost know them to be hers ? Who gave them
to thee ?

Gif. Her secretary, Curl.

Dav. But are you sure they are the queen's own
hand ?

Gif. Her hand I know, and this I'm sure's her
writing.

To me they are first deliver'd to convey.

[*Producing letters.*

And henceforth, as they come into my hands,
To you I'll bring them.

Dav. Do so; which I'll open,
And cause them to be neatly counterfeited,
Then send the false, and keep the true ones by me.
But hold, we are perceived; come, follow me,
And when time serves, I'll bring thee to the queen.

[*Exeunt.*

*Enter Queen MARY, DOWGLAS, and attendants at the
other door, and sees DAVISON and GIFFORD.*

Qu. M. Shew me the unfrequented'st gallery
“To walk in; for we have not chang'd our state;
“We only have a little larger prison.”

Dow. Ha!

Qu. M. What ails the guardian genius of his queen?
Why this disorder? Wherefore didst thou start?

Dow. Saw you that fellow, madam?

140

Qu. M. Yes; why ask'st thou?

Dow. I know not; but a sudden horror seiz'd me
At that man's sight——
Was not that Davison and he together
In private talk? Ah, madam, Davison!
A spy of quality, a leger here
Of plots against your sacred innocence.
By your unspotted soul! just such a person
(I wish he's not the same) I often saw
With Navus, during your imprisonment:

Oh, my prophetic heart warns and foretels me,
There's mischief gathering in your scarce clos'd wound.

Qu. M. There's no fear ; for my kind sister's love,
And my own innocence, shall conquer all
That hell or malice can invent against me.

Dav. What mean these drops ? Oh, stars ! what
meant this shaking ?

Your prophets never wept, nor trembled so,
For pity when they told the fate of kingdoms.
Ah, brightest star that e'er adorn'd the world !
Take, take, young Dowglas' counsel, and retire ! 160
Oh, shun the barb'rous place ; and fly this moment.

Qu. M. What dost thou mean ?

Dow. I know not, but am pull'd
By some strange destiny, that seems to you
As if I rav'd, but blest were you 'twere madness.
Last night, no sooner was I laid to rest,
“ But just three drops of blood fell from my nose,
“ And stain'd my pillow, which I found this morning,
“ And wonder'd at.

“ *Qu. M.* That rather does betoken
“ Some mischief to thyself.

“ *Dow.* Perhaps to cowards,
“ Who prize their own base lives ; but to the brave,
“ 'Tis always fatal to the friend they love.
“ Mark farther : I was scarcely fallen asleep,”
But you were represented to my fancy,
Deck'd like a bride, with Norfolk in your hand ;
The amorous duke, that smiles with every glance,
Whilst you return'd them, with more piercing darts ;

But strait it seem'd to lighten, and a peal 180
Of dreadful thunder rent you from each other,
Whilst from the ceiling, painted o'er like heaven,
Methought I saw the furious queen of England,
Like angry Juno mounted on a cloud,
Descend in flames, at which dread sight you vanish'd.

Qu. M. These are but starts of an o'erwatchful soul,
Which always represent to us asleep,
What most we fear or wish when we're awake.

Dow. Ah! my best mistress! on my knees I beg,
Though the brave duke be as renown'd as any
That e'er the antients first chose out for gods;
“ Though never man so rivall'd all the sex,
“ And left them bare of virtue, like himself;”
Yet for your precious life's sake, that's more worth
Than thousand dukes, break off your marriage with
him.

Qu. M. My little guardian angel, thou hast rous'd
And beat a war within my breast, between
The interest of my love, and preservation:
Thou know'st 'twas long consulted, and at last
Concluded best for my uncertain state; 200
Leicester and Cecil both have given their words,
And Morton too, to gain the queen's consent.

“ *Dow.* There's Morton in it, therefore go no
farther.

“ *Qu. M.* Thou would'st not have me wed the gal-
lant duke,

“ Yet thou would'st have me fly. Where shall I fly?

“ I dare not go to Scotland, that lays wait

" To catch me in a hundred snares of death ;
 " And into France I must not, will not go ;
 " For then my sister might with reason say,
 " I went for help to drive her from her throne."

Dow. See where he comes, just in the moment.

Fate,

Lo your ill stars against themselves are kind,
 And send to warn you, that you might avoid it.

Qu. M. What shall I do ? Say, Dowglas ! Lo, I
stand

Like one that in a desert lost his way,
 Sees several paths, yet knowing not the right,
 Stands in amaze, and fears to venture any.

Enter NORFOLK and MORTON.

Nor. What ! what in tears, thou mourning excellence !

Shed not the precious balm in vain ; " but spare it,
 " To heal the world, when nature is a dying, 220
 " And chaos shall be threaten'd once again ;
 " O save those pearls to buy large empires for us :
 " And when we have liv'd long centuries in love,
 " To purchase twice as many years from fate."

Mor. Weep you, when love and hymen gladly wait
To banish grief for ever from your breast ?

Qu. M. Morton, I will proceed no further in this
marriage,

My lord, I fear it will be fatal to us.

Nor. What do I hear !

Qu. M. By all my hopes I must not,

Most gallant Norfolk, to your generous love
I owe my freedom, nay, what's more, my life,
And Mary's heart is but the least return
That she can make; but if that heart proves fatal,
A wretched load to curse with woes the owner,
And sink the noble vessel that it freights,
Pity forbids me then to be so cruel——
Think I deny you for your own dear safety;
Think I deny myself—run, fly, forsake me,
Seek not for shelter in a falling tower, 240
But leave me to be wretched here alone.

Nor. “Should all the fiends break loose, and stop
my way,

“And yon blue marble roof and stars descend,

“To crush me in my hopes; I'd on this moment,

“And perish with my love, but I'd enjoy her.”

Give me thy trembling hand: the whitest lily,

Set in the fairest garden of the world,

Chaster and purer than the virgin snow——

If 'tis a sin to blot out with a tear;

Oh, could it speak, 'twould expiate its crime,

“And say my soul still wants a rougher language,

“To chide my Albion Queen.”

Qu. M. Cease, Norfolk, cease.

By all your hopes of happiness and mine,

Your kinder genius, not my own, foretels

This deed will be the ruin of us both:

First break it to the queen; gain her consent.

Mor. That is already done;

Leicester long since implor'd her royal leave,

She knows it, and in not forbidding it, 260
Her silence may be taken for a grant.

Qu. M. Delay it but a day, and let me haste,
(If shame, your cruel foe, will give me leave)
And ask the queen's consent.

Mor. You yet create new hazards,
And still forget the queen denies to see you :
Besides, that were to wake some new surmise
Of state ; perhaps she'll then demur on the request,
And call your foes to council ; but, if done,
And past prevention, she'll not blame the deed.

“ *Nor.* Oh, gallant Morton ! let me hold thee thus ;
“ More pitiful than sighing virgins are,
“ And kind as interceding angels, thou.”

Mor. Go quickly then, and tie the sacred knot
Due to your interests, due to matchless love.
“ Elizabeth shall jealous be no more,
“ Nor fearful then that any foreign prince
“ Too soon should join his kingdom to your right,
“ And claim your lawful title to the crown——”
Go instantly—howe'er she seems to frown, 280
She'll smile within her heart when once 'tis done.

Nor. By all your woes now felt, and joys to come,
And more, by all your precious vows, I charm you.

Qu. M. Why do you hold me ? Where d'yehurry me ?
To be your fate ! To be your enemy !

Nor. Remember, oh, remember Fotheringay !
Forget not what is heard, and echoes still,
Your oft repeated vows, and Norfolk's groans.

Qu. M. Some pitying angel from above look down,

And shew me straight the path that I must follow.

Mor. Away; the sun sets forth like a gay bride-man
with you.

Qu. M. Come then, conduct me, since I must.
And now ambition, empire, all be gone,
I leave you with your heavy weight, a crown;
And if I err, bright register above,
Mark, with forgiveness, all my fault was love.

Mor. Curst accident! The queen is here.

Qu. M. What's that you say? Oh, take me from
her sight;

“Joy and pale fear within like giants fight;”
Hope bids me go: my trembling heart forbids: 300
But who can love and reason both obey?
“Do what you will with me, away, away.” [*Retire.*]

Enter Queen ELIZABETH, CECIL, DAVISON, lords, attendants, guards. Queen ELIZABETH sees Queen MARY and NORFOLK going off on the other side.

Qu. El. Ha! see, my lords! behold!
Is that the queen and Norfolk so officious?
Traitor!

Cec. May it please your majesty, it is.

Qu. El. Bid him come back. See, she comes with
him too.

My lord, how durst you to approach that hand?
Nay, talk with an offender against your queen,
And slight thus plain my absolute commands?

Qu. M. Alas! let not the noble duke for me be
blam'd,

Nor bear a weight so heavy as your anger,
“When I am thought by you the foul aggressor!”
He only met a poor abandon’d wretch,
Lost in a wild, and put her in the way;
For here I wander by myself forlorn,
Know few, and taken notice of by none.

“*Qu. El.* She has a royal presence, awful form!
“By those bright constellations o’er our heads,
“Which story feigns were charming women once,
“There is not half that beauty in those orbs, 321
“Nor majesty on earth. [Aside.

“Think you, my lords,
“That she appears so beautiful as fam’d?
“Give me a glass—Ha! how’s this jewel plac’d!
“What a vile curl and aukward patch is here!
“Look but on her! And yet, methinks,
“She’s much beholden to her sable dress,
“As through a sky of jet, stars glitter most.

“*Cec.* Not to deny the charms of Scotland’s queen,
“Yours rival hers, and all the sex.

“*Qu. El.* Nay, now you grossly flatter me, my lord;
“’Tis long of such mean sycophants as thou,
“That princes are so wretched, ne’er to know
“The errors of their persons, or their minds.”

Qu. M. What, not a word! Am not I worth one
word!

Now, stars, I dare you now to do your worst,
You cannot curse me more now if you would.

Qu. El. Ha! she shoots magic from her very looks,
And every word’s a charm that lulls my rage; 340

“ Like falling drops of mild and gentle rain,
“ They wear into this breast of adamant.”

Assist me now, my courage, pity, friends;
Support me all! How shall I bear it now?

Qu. M. Nor yet a look! Not one kind look upon me!
No token that I once was Scotland's queen!

Qu. El. Hear'st thou this, Burleigh—cruel Davison!
“ Ye seed of rocks, ye brood of wolves and tygers!
“ Y've turned me into stone, more monstrous than
yourselves!

“ If I but look on her, she awes my sight;
“ Like a loath'd fiend I dare not see the light.”

Qu. M. Did I ever think our meeting would be thus!
Thus Mary and Elizabeth should greet!

“ So do the Christians with the Pagans treat,

“ The brave Plantagenet with Ottoman,

“ The golden eagle with the silver crescent,

“ But never thus the white cross with the red.

“ *Nor.* This needs must charm, were she more
fell than woman——

“ She melts, yet fain would hide it—Happy sign!”

Qu. M. The friendly ocean, when the world was
made, 360

Took care to join our kingdoms near together;

And shall not we our loves and tender hearts?

We, who one happy loving island holds,

Of the same sex,

And one rich blood travels through both our veins.

Should we thus meet, and at a distance talk?

Q. El. Support me, Cecil, *I sink with shame.*

“ *Qu. M.* The beauteous Margaret, your royal aunt,
“ Whose right and lawful grand-daughter I am,
“ Met not my grand-father, the valiant James,
“ With such a scornful and neglected brow;
“ For if she had, I never had been born.
“ And you not known the hated queen of Scotland.

“ *Q. El.* Come, lift me from the place where I am
rooted,
“ On wings of angels bear me to her arms.”

Qu. M. Whate’er may be the effects of nature’s
power,
In your hard breast; I’m sure that part of you
That is mine, torments me to get forth,
Bounds upwards, and leaps from me to embrace you.
My whole blood starts!—— 380

Qu. El. And mine can hold no longer——
My sister—Oh! [Run and embrace.

Qu. M. Can this be real?

Qu. El. Throw thy lov’d arms, as I do mine, about
thee,

And never feel less joy than I do now——

“ Oh, ’tis to great, it is unspeakable;
“ Cleave to my breast, for I want words to tell.”

Qu. M. Then injuries, farewell, and all my wrongs.
Forgiveness now, and pleasures fill my breast.
They were not half so great when I espous’d,
And threw these arms about young France’s neck,
And laid me down the queen of half the world.
I feel the blood of both our ancestors;
The spirits of Tudor and Plantagenet

Glow through my veins, and start up to my lips,
To parley with, to wonder and to kiss
Their royal brothers hovering upon thine.

Qu. El. Witness, ye powers! Take notice how I
love her!
Worship this token, as glad saints receive
Ambassadors from heaven. 400

Qu. M. Oh, let me go!
Give my wild joy some breath, “some room to
walk in;
“ Oh, I shall burst into a thousand pieces!
“ As many atoms as my queen has charms—”
A thousand years of pains is not enough
For this one moment of seraphic joy.
That she is kind, and thinks me innocent!
Innocent! That one word’s far above
The wealth of crowns, nay, all but you, and love.

Qu. El. Ah, royal sister! urge my guilt no more,
But blot it from thy breast, as I from mine.
Down on your knees—all that regard my frowns:
Behold your queens, both Scot and English here;
Hear, thou wide ocean, hear thy Albion queens:
Let my dread voice far as thy waves be heard,
From silver Thames to golden Tweed proclaim,
With harmony of drums and trumpet’s sound,
Not me, not her alone, not one, but both;
Sound Mary and Elizabeth your queens.

[*Kettle-drums and trumpets sound, and beat here;
then all rise again from kneeling.*]

Qu. M. Oh, be less kind! lest fate should snatch
my joys, 420

And hoard them up for an immortal treasure,
“For they’re too great for mortal sense to bear.”

Qu. El. “I do her wrong to keep her from new joys:
“Each moment shall beget, each hour bring forth
“Fresh pleasures, and rich welcomes, to delight her.
“Prepare her table, deck the bed of state,
“Let her apartment shine with golden arras,
“Strew perfumes in her way sweeter than incense,
“Rare as the sun draws every morning up,
“And fragrant as the breath upon her lips;
“Soft music sound where e’er she wakes or sleeps,
“Music as sweet, harmonious, and as still,
“As does this soft and gentle bosom fill.”

Thus let us go, with hand in hand combin’d,
The white cross with the red thus ever join’d.
England with Scotland shall no longer jar;
And Albany with Albion no more war;
But thus we’ll live, and walk thus every day,
’Till from the verge of life we drop away:
So have we seen two streams, with eager pace,
Hasten to meet, and lovingly embrace, 440
Making one current, as we make one soul,
’Till arm in arm, they in the ocean roll. [Exeunt.]

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter CECIL and DAVISON severally.

Cecil.

“ WEEP, Davison, and drown thy head in tears;
 “ Or let thy tongue, for eloquence so fam’d,
 “ Be mute for ever; once like angels sounding,
 “ To charm the ears of our offended monarch.”

The gallant duke, the darling of his country,
 The Scipio, the delight of all mankind,
 The nation’s glory, star of shining virtue,
 Is lost. You came from searching of his closet;
 We are his friends; say, have you any hopes!

Dav. Oh, none! The false and treacherous Morton,
 That fir’d the Duke’s fond passion for the queen,
 Then, like a villain, to his foes betray’d him;
 This serpent of delusion has discover’d
 Whate’er the brave and generous-hearted man
 Did in his harmless mind entrust him with.

Cec. What token, or what circumstance of treason,
 Amongst his papers found you?

Dav. Very little,
 Besides his aim to wed the queen of Scotland.
 “ Yet one thing points some colour of a guilt; 20
 “ It did appear he furnish’d her with money,
 “ To aid her friends in Scotland; who, you know,
 “ Now at this time invade our English borders.

“ Here is the paper, which, alas! was found
“ Under the quilt, beneath poor Norfolk’s bed,
“ Plac’d there on purpose, as suppos’d by all,
“ By Hickford, a domestic of the duke’s.
“ Who, apprehended, has accus’d his master.”
Read here a list of several lords, his friends,
As Arundel, Southampton, and some others,
All order’d to be taken.

Cec. Cruel chance!

What temper holds the queen in this extreme?

Dav. Fiery, and cool, and melting in a breath,
At one she sighs, and pities the fall’n man,
And the same moment rages and upbraids him.

Cec. Oh, she must worse be stung before to-morrow!
“ How will she bear herself, when she shall know
“ The foul conspiracy of Babington?”
Place Gifford ready as the queen comes forth; 40
’Tis dangerous to conceal it any longer.
Methinks I pity less the fate of Mary,
Now it has cost the ruin of the Duke—
See where he comes! Would Cecil had no eyes;
Yet he bears manly up, rears his stout head
Like a bold vessel in a storm, and scatters
Bright beams of majesty through all his clouds.

Enter Duke and guards.

Room for the duke——

Nor. Room for the duke! Room for no duke, no
substance now;
The emblem of dissembling greatness rather.

Man is the truest dial of his fate;
His prince's favour, like the sun at noon,
Shews not a thing so beautiful and gay;
But as the planet sets, too soon he spies
His growing shadow painted on the ground;
Oh, Cecil! thou and Leicester have undone me;
Brought by thy cruel caution to my ruin,
And by the traitor Morton thus betray'd.

Cec. These tears be witnesses, I never meant it.

Nor. I must believe you, yet you are 60
Too good a statesman, and too nice a friend.

Cec. By all that's just, you wrong the love I bear
you——

Behold the queen—I'll gain your life, brave duke,
Or hazard now my own.

*Enter Queen ELIZABETH, MORTON, gentlemen, guards,
ladies.*

Most merciful, most royal, and belov'd!
Behold your Cecil bends, who ne'er yet su'd
To you in vain—Oh, spare the gallant duke,
Who in this act of adoration, vows
Henceforth to prove the faithfull'st of your vassals,
And from this hour to abjure the queen of Scotland.

Nor. Hold, Burleigh, hold; proceed not for the
globe;

If the least word that I'll abjure the queen
'Scapes from thy mouth, by my bright hopes, 'tis false.
Thus I'll ask pardon, though I never wrong'd you.

[*Kneels.*

'Tis but a word, and I'll do it again :
For kings are like divinities on earth,
Whom none can serve, but must sometimes offend.
But to deny my love, and to disclaim her !
Oh, ye bright powers ! abjure my Albion Queen !
First let me grovel in some loathsome dungeon, 80
And feed on damps and vapours like a toad.
“ What, to save my life ! a hated skull ! ”
Had I as many heads as I have hairs,
Reap'd from this body like a field of corn ;
Yet after all, not one should be so base.

Qu. El. You'll find, bold duke, this one has said
too much,

“ And done more than a thousand heads can answer.
Go, send him to the Tower :

I'll have him try'd to-morrow ; and, if guilty,
Beheaded straight ; send his ambitious head

To travel for that airy crown it wish'd for ;

And tell me, when 'tis off, if then it talks,

Or calls out for his Albion Queen to help him.

“ Oh, where, my soul, is there a friend that's just ?

“ Or, after him, a man that I can trust ? [*Aside.*

Nor. You need not doubt it ;

That dying martyr who invokes her name,

Calls for more aid than all the queens on earth ;

“ She is herself thy genius ; but for her,

“ This isle had been like flaming *Ætna* found, 100

Or, as the world was, in a deluge drown'd.

Qu. El. She's false, and thou a most ungrateful
traitor !

Here's Morton, Cecil, all the world can tell,
Thou did'st aspire to marry her, and get my crown.

Nor. By my immortal hopes, I am betray'd,
And she's abus'd by traitors——

No, Cecil won't, no honest subject dares;
But Morton, as the worst of furies, may.

“ Oh, she's so good, so innocent and mild,

“ That, Scotland, wert thou curs'd to that degree,

“ Should all thy scatter'd seeds yield nought but
poisons,

“ And pregnant women bring forth none but Mortons,

“ Thou hast aton'd for all those plagues in giving her.”

Qu. El. Away with him; “ and let me never see

“ That head again, but on a pinnacle.”

Nor. Be witness, all ye powers, I bear it mildly;

And for my fate, I kneel again, and bless you:

May you live ever; and for Norfolk's death,

No dire remorse disturb your balmy rest;

But may your soft eternity glide on,

120

In dreams of paradise, and golden slumbers.

But for the injur'd queen, inspir'd I rise,

And tho' a threaten'd prophet, yet dare speak:

Whene'er she falls, may her accusers all

The stings of conscience feel within their breast,

And never know the transport of the blest:

“ Prometheus' vultures in their bowels feel,

“ And with their king of traitors roar in torments.

“ But thou, a queen, that judg'd this royal martyr,

“ Loud cherubins to earth your guilt shall sound,

“ Which worse than the last trumpet shall rebound;

“ Wake or asleep, her image shall appear,
“ And always hollow Mary in your ear.” [*Exit guarded.*
Cec. Now, Davison’s the time.

Dav. May’t please your majesty—
What shall be done with the offending queen?

Qu. El. Nothing, bold saucy penman, I say, nothing—
Send Norfolk to the Tower; but, on your lives,
I charge you, use no violence on her. 139

Make not such haste; too soon you’ll break this heart.
Then glut yourselves with slaughter of my subjects.

Cec. Then so much for the duke—Call Gifford in.

Enter GIFFORD.

If you are steep’d as in a lethargy
Of love, and o’er-grown mercy to the queen,
And will not let your eyes behold your danger,
Then we, who are your watchful servants, must
Behold and hear; for ’tis so loud and plain,
That ’twill astonish ev’ry sense about you.
This man, this honest man, whose statue ought
To be set up in gold in all our streets,
Inspir’d from above, discovers that himself
With five bold ruffians more, were all set on
By Mary queen of Scots, to murder you.

Qu. El. To murder me!

Dav. With sacrament they bound it,
More horrid than e’er Catiline invented,
Who, t’enslave Rome, ty’d it with human blood.
First view the monsters pictur’d to the life,
Each with their several instruments of fate

Wav'd in his hand, with which to hell they swore, 160

“ If either of them fail'd,” to write your doom.

Qu. El. Protect me, angels !

Cec. What, does this make you start ?

“ Do these strange hieroglyphics raise your wonder ?

“ The slave that fir'd the gaudy fane at Ephesus,

“ Deserv'd to be a saint to these : he strove

“ But for an odious credit after death ;

“ But these, alas ! presumptuously defy

“ Heaven and the world to anticipate the blow,

“ And tell mankind they glory in the deed.”

Qu. El. What's here ? A Latin sentence, which
their chief

Does seem to bellow from his hellish mouth.

These are the men whom danger only leads—

Here is thy face makes one among the ruffians.

Gif. With horror I confess it.

Qu. El. Tell the rest.

Gif. I will ; but wonder when you hear what men
Of several stations join'd to do this mischief :

“ The elements are not so aptly mix'd

“ To make a perfect world, as they to act a deed 180

“ Would startle nature and unfix the globe,

“ And hurl it from its axle-tree and hinges.”

The first is Babington ; rich, and of birth

Might lift him to be rank'd amongst the nobles ;

Young, proud and daring, fiery and ambitious.

Qu. El. I know the gentleman ; of Derbyshire ;
He came to me for leave to go to France.

Gif. The same.

Qu. El. Oh, horrid! who can read a villain?
 How subtly nature paints, hides a false heart,
 And shrouds a traitor in an angel's garb!
 The next.

Gif. Tilny—a courtier.

Cec. What, the queen's own servant!

Dav. I know him too; his father's only hopes,
 Heir to a great estate. Oh, parricide!

Gif. This Barnwel—turbulent and precipitate,
 A bloody-minded wretch, fit for the deed;
 “Of Ireland.

“*Cec.* I believe each word thou say'st; 200
 “Without his country it could have been no plot.”

Gif. Savage—a ruffian of the worst degree,
 And never to be painted as he is;
 Stew'd in a brothel-house, and tann'd in blood.

Qu. El. Oh, queen! oh, Mary! where's thy re-
 fuge now?

Gif. The fifth is Charnock, student of the law.
 Lastly, to make the compound great, myself.

Qu. El. I've heard too much; hence, and be dumb
 for ever!

Oh, for the quiet that my mind has lost!
 Strip me of glory, titles, and renown,
 I'll give them all for that so blest repose
 Last night I felt. “Deny me not this prayer;
 “Curse me with madness, blast me with diseases,
 “Turn all these hairs to snakes upon my head,
 “To hiss me from the stage of mortal life;
 “Melt this loath'd diadem with lightning down;

“ Not as it ran before it was a crown,
“ And to a desert let me strait be sent;
“ I’ll suffer all, make her but innocent.”

Cec. ’Tis fit you double all your strength about you,
And let the queen immediately be seiz’d. 221

“ *Qu. El.* ’Tis false! she is abus’d, and this is
forg’d:

“ She is not, nay, she shall not guilty be,
“ See, monster, fury, traitor, altogether Jesuit!
“ Be sure thou prov’st this crime upon my sister,
“ Be sure thou dost, without the smallest doubt,
“ Or I will rack thee with ten thousand tortures:
“ No, I will have thee long, long years a dying;
“ Feed thee by weight, to starve a grain a day,
“ Whilst thy vile flesh whole ages shall decay,
“ And spirits by slow degrees distil away.

“ Yet, oh, ’tis all too little to recall
“ That wealthy mass of quiet thou hast lost me!

“ *Cec.* ’Tis the request of all your faithful subjects,
“ That you’d be pleas’d to seize the queen of Scotland,
“ Lest she should act what is but yet design’d.”

Dav. Your sacred life’s in danger every hour:
For your poor kingdom’s sake, and for your own:
For all your nation’s lives depend on yours.

Qu. El. Rise——

246

Let the conspirators be apprehended.
Of whom this Gifford gives you information.

Cec. And not the queen?——

Qu. El. Oh, spare my sister’s life!

If nothing but a queen's blood will content you,
Take mine, ye barb'rous hunters.

“ *Cec.* Alas!

“ *Qu. El.* Begone! why was this hid from me so long?

“ If this were real, I had soon been dead,

“ And then ne'er felt the blow, 'cause unsuspected.

“ But now ten thousand deaths are not so painful

“ As this curs'd life, which thou dost strive to save.

“ My soul's in torment, reputation, all

“ In this loath'd act, which thou wouldst have me do.

“ *Cec.* Whose soul, whose reputation will be rack'd,

“ And censur'd with severest pains hereafter?

“ If by your fond neglect you lose that life,

“ Intrusted by the powers to guard your nation,

“ And leave your laws and liberties betray'd;

“ Your people, all a prey to foreign monsters, 260

“ Die, and bequeath the dagger in your breast,

“ To brood, and get an hundred thousand more,

“ Perhaps as many as your subjects throats.

“ Nay, we must speak, think what you will, and weep;

“ For, not to tell you, 'tis to be more cruel.

“ *Qu. El.* But how shall I be censur'd,

“ To throw this charming guest so quickly from

“ My bosom, and then shut her in a grate?

“ 'Twas but last night she had another prison.

“ *Cec.* There's now no time for answer or dispute:

“ Either resolve her fate, or bear your own.”

Qu. El. Begone, I charge you, tempt your queen
no more.

Woman was form'd of mildness, love and pity :
Take from me first the softness of my sex.
Were I the hot, revengeful monster, man ;
A man, a savage, fierce Hyrcanian tyger,
Yet I could not be so cruel.

Cec. Then since you'll shut your ears to all safe
counsel,

Bear witness, you celestial Powers, and you,
My queen, I have discharg'd my duty, 280
And clear'd myself of your approaching danger.
But ere that dreadful day of your eclipse,
Come, Davison, let thee and I go wander ;
Far we'll remove, where such a horrid deed
Shall neither blast our eyes, nor reach our ears.
England, farewell ; I've serv'd you well and long ;
We'll not stay here to be good-counsel's martyrs,
And to be torn in pieces by the rabble,
When you are dead, which we forewarn'd you of :
Tho' ne'er so just, and cautious of your fame,
A king's miscarriage is the statesman's blame.

Qu. El. Stay, I command you——
Arrest a crown ! impeach a sovereign queen ! [*Aside.*
Here, take my crown, depose me first, or kill me ;
Let Gifford's dagger do its fatal office :
Then like a nest of tyrants you may reign,
And under public laws do public wrongs ;
“ But royal power can never be so cruel.”

Cec. Behold she comes. Command we apprehend
her.

Qu. E. You have my leave ; do with us as you please. 300

But, tyrants, send me straight, where, by your power,
These cruel eyes may never see her more. [*Going off.*]

Enter Queen MARY and DOWGLAS, ladies and gentlemen.

Qu. M. Turn, turn, your face, and give one long'd-for look,

My charming queen ! the morning's gone, and yet
I have not seen those eyes, that bless the morn.

Hide not those looks where beams of justice shine,
And pity sits enthron'd with majesty.

I hear the duke of Norfolk's in displeasure ;

Forgive the brave, unhappy man.

Why sighs my queen ? Why bend your royal head,
As loth to grant ? Can mercy, ha ! can I too plead in
vain ?

Nay, then I'll bind you with these chains of love ;
Lean my sad cheek on yours, and mix your tears with
mine.

Qu. El. Now rescue me, or I am lost.

Dav. Guards execute your orders on the queen.
We beg your majesty, for love of fame,
By your unbias'd rule, and charms of justice,
Rouze your imperial courage, and display
An awful and offended majesty. 320

Cec. For now your wisdom, crown, and life's at
stake ?

Nay, and the lives of all your faithful subjects,
For this one precious moment of your conduct.

Qu. M. I will obey; your orders fright not me,
Nor stir my soul, so lately us'd to wrongs.

What is my crime? Yet wherefore do I ask?

“For chains look lovelier far about these arms

“Than diamonds; and tears hang on my neck

“More beautiful than strings of orient pearl.”

Qu. El. Ah, cruel princess, we are both undone!

You've robb'd your sister's breast of all its treasure,

More than my crown, you've robb'd me of yourself.

Dav. Mary, late queen of Scotland, y'are impeach'd,

By the name of Mary Stewart, of high treason;

For plotting to usurp your sovereign's crown,

And hiring Babington to kill the queen.

Qu. M. Hear thrones and powers that guard the in-
nocent!

The Gorgon is at last disclos'd to view.

What, kill my sister! hurt your precious life!

Oh, monster of invention! cruel falsehood! 340

And, oh, vile calumny, begot in hell!

Nay, then I see my ruin is decreed;

The duke must die, and I must suffer too.

But, cruel foes, had you no way but this,

To blast me with eternal infamy?

And canst thou, canst thou close thy eyes against me?

“Oh, bright vengeance! is there none in store?

“Will Fate that Providence from me debar,

“When every living insect claims a share?

“Will you lock fast your adamantine doors,

“ Now, when a queen, an injur’d queen implores ?

“ *Qu. El.* Incroaching pity stop thy flowing torrent,
“ And ebbing nature sink to that extreme
“ Of cruel Brutus, that condemn’d his son ;
“ For this is now my trial.”

Qu. M. Say, amongst you,
Who is that man or devil, that dare accuse me ?

Dav. The traitor has confess’d his guilt, and yours,
With letters that you sign’d, to do the deed.

Qu. M. Hear, hear, just powers, and all your guard
of kings ?

“ Hear, royal maid, for virgin pity fam’d !”

Heard you how they did slander majesty ?

And can you bear it ? Half these veins are yours,

My royal title, tender sex the same,

Doubly of kin, in royalty and blood ;

And can you hear your sister, hear yourself so stain’d ?

Qu. El. Oh, blame not me, but curse the fate of
princes ;

We are but guardians of our subjects’ rights,

And stewards of our own, none bound so fast

To keep the laws they make, as the creators selves.

Alas, I am like one that sees far off,

Have all the wishes of a friend to save you,

But ty’d by oath, and cannot stir to help you !

Qu. M. This Babington, *who ne’er yet curs’d my sight,*
Must be some villain hir’d to do this treason,
And lay it upon me. But bear me witness all, and
you,

That of disjointed atoms form’d the sun,

The shining heavens, the planets and the world,
 So wonderful and glorious as they are,
 Who sees into the soul, and all its walks, 380
 Thro' this dark mould, transparent as a glass!
 Oh, may these fatal eyes, worshipp'd like stars,
 Drop from this visage, once like Heaven ador'd,
 And leave this face a death's-head, to be shunn'd ;
 Or may this horrid hand, this hand, or this,
 That once was fragrant with the breath of kings,
 That kneel'd to kiss this wrong'd, this innocent hand,
 May it drop from me, like a wither'd branch
 From this vile stock, and never sprout again,
 If e'er I will'd the deed, or sign'd such letter.

Qu. El. 'Tis time for me to go ; is't not my jailors !
 I have seen more than any tyger could.

Oh, pity'd queen, farewell !

Qu. M. Is then your boasted love debas'd to pity ?
 Oh, stay, and mingle kindness with your justice !
 I beg not for myself, but for my fame,
 To die's no pain, but to die branded is a thousand
 deaths.

“ *Qu. El.* Enough ; 'tis cruelty in me to go,
 “ And worse to stay.

“ *Qu. M.* Yet I intreat you stay. 400
 “ Are you so cruel to believe me perjur'd ? [*Holds her.*

“ *Qu. El.* Yet loose, for pity of us both, let go :
 “ The world has not so griev'd a wretch as I ;
 “ And thou lay'st hold upon so weak a bough,
 “ That the least weight will sink me quite with thee.

“*Qu. M.* Hear me, thou deaf and cruel queen!

Ah, no!

“Thou mild as babes, and tender as their mothers!

“Hear me but this, this once, this last—What, neither?

“Then to just Heaven I kneel, and not to thee——

“Here let my knees take root. [*Kneels.*”

Dav. Tho’ clear and spotless as the light you are,
Yet that must be examin’d by the laws;
The lords must quit you.

Qu. M. Must the law then judge me?

Nay, then I’ll rise with shame from this mean posture;

“And now I feel the majesty of kings

“Dart from above, to hear itself profan’d,

“Stretching my soul and limbs to such a vastness,

“As the first race of mankind e’er the flood,

“When heroes more than mortal rul’d the world.” 420

Come, bring me straight to this contemn’d tribunal;

Then all the courage

Of my imperial ancestors inspire

“This breast, from Fergus first, to James, my son,

“Last of his breast that sway’d the Scottish globe

“For fifteen hundred years, shine through my face:

“Print on my forehead every awful look,”

Defend your royal right, and for me plead,

Shoot from my eyes, and strike my judges dead.

Qu. El. If Mary’s fate were sentenc’d by this breath.

If that were judge, I would this hour acquit her.

Depend upon thy innocence and me:

When that is clear'd, we shall both yet be happy.
I can no more—Farewell—Grief ties my speech,
And pity drowns my eyes.—*Farewell!*

Qu. M. Pity'd by you! I will not die so meanly:
No, tho' in chains, yet I'm more brave and free,
Scorn thy base mercy, and do pity thee:
Thou canst not take my life; but if thou darest,
I'll leave a race as numerous as the stars 440
Whilst thou shalt fall with barrenness acurst,
And thy tormented soul with envy burst,
To see thy crown on Mary's issue shine.
And England flourish with a race of mine.

[*Exit guarded.*

“*Qu. El.* Stay, sister, stay——

“ Oh, 'tis too late!
“ She's gone! dragg'd from me by the merc'less laws,
“ Nor can I tear her from the vulture's talons;
“ But, oh! like the distracted mother roar,
“ Whose child a wolf had from its cradle bore;
“ Hastes to its aid, and all the way, in vain,
“ To Heaven, and to the savage does complain,
“ Speaks the beast kind, till hearing, as he flies,
“ Betwixt his teeth her tender infant's cries,
“ Then she adds wings, and in her flight does rave,
“ With eager hopes its precious life to save;
“ But finds the monster with her bowels gor'd,
“ And in her sight its panting limbs devour'd.”

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

Enter MORTON and DAVISON, severally.

Morton.

WELL have we met, thou Machiavel of England,
And rival to great Cecil in his fame !
There's something of importance on thy brow,
Whereon I read the great delinquent's fate.

Dav. Queen Mary is condemn'd, and which is worse,
The sentence of the duke must rest no longer,
And Norfolk is this hour to lose his head.

Mor. The plot of Barny, to release the duke,
Was thought the means to urge his speedy end.

Dav. He had obtain'd his pardon, but for that,
His circumstance of treason was so slight.
Poor duke ! the most unfortunate and brave !
He comes to meet his death within these walls,
Where she must enter and prepare for hers ;
And chance, alas ! may be so kind or cruel,
To let them meet. Her sentence was pronounc'd,
And she repairing hither in her barge.

Mor. How did the haughty queen submit herself ?

Dav. This great commission, which consisted of
All the queen's lords and counsellors of state, 20
(Of which myself was one, with five of the judges)
made
The highest throne of justice upon earth ;

Yet she contemn'd, and scorn'd them as too base
To sit upon, and judge a sovereign queen.

Mor. How could you then proceed?

Dav. The court o'er-rul'd it as a slight objection,
And said, they did not try her there as queen,
But as a private prisoner to the laws.

Mor. A nice distinction that, "and like your lawyers."

Dav. At last, having deny'd, with constancy,
The legal power of this imperial court,
And finding all too plainly prov'd against her,
"As a rare swimmer, shipwreck'd on the ocean,
"A vast and dreadful distance from the shore,
"And hopeless grown, with all his arts to reach it,
"Gives himself o'er contentedly to drown,"
So she sat down, and mildly then submitted.

Mar. But what was the most stabbing proof against
her,
Her correspondence had with Babington?

Dav. Behold, the duke's just coming forth to die: 40
The queen is entering too; 'tis as I fear'd. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Queen MARY and guards. The Duke of NORFOLK and two guards, as going to execution.

Qu. M. Must the brave duke receive his death to-day?

Dow. Alas, see where he comes! a sight will kill you.

Qu. M. Quick, lead me, drive me from this dismal object.

Will the queen's malice hunt me to the last,
 Nor leave me when I'm at the bounds of death?
 Was there no time but now, no way but this?
 Oh, hide me in the bosom of yon cloud,
 Or cover me with mountains to avoid him!

Nor. My queen, my lovely Albion Queen!—Sure I'm
 Already dead, and this the happy region,
 Where souls like hers receive their bless'd rewards.

Qu. M. Turn, much-wrong'd duke, ere death seals
 thy eyes;

“This moment tear them out, as I would mine;”
 Shun me, as here thou wouldst thy horrid fate,
 “Or mouth of basilisk.”

Nor. What says my queen?

Qu. M. Is not thy wrong'd and valiant spirit shock'd,
 And death a much more welcome guest than I,
 And worse to see me than to feel the blow? 62

Nor. By all your wrongs and mine——

Qu. M. Oh, come not near me!

“'Tis said, a murder'd body, tho' 'tis cold,
 “And all its veins frozen and congeal'd in death;
 “When he approaches nigh that did the deed,
 “Warm'd by the mighty power of just revenge,
 “Pours a warm flood, and bleeds afresh.”

Why dart you not a peal of curses on me?

“Your eyes Promethean fire, to blast my soul?

“And why's not every hair upon thy head

“Arm'd, like the bristly porcupine, against me?”

Nor. Love's wounds may bleed in Death's; but
 grief ease.

The axe, these guards, and this grim pomp of fate,
 Stir me no more, than acted in a play.
 My love's immortal, too divine to fear,
 And feels no horror, but to part with you.
 Oh, could I but redeem your precious life,
 I'd fly to meet the torments of the fiends
 A thousand years, and die thus every day!

Qu. M. Alas, most pitied prince! force not these
 drops,

80

Tears, the kind balm, to ease all tortur'd breasts
 But mine, and mine finds no relief. Begone—oh, no!
 For you must ne'er return—Let me begone.

Nor. For death I am prepar'd, but not to part with
 you.

Qu. M. 'Twill not be long, "some two or three
 short days,

"Or hours, perhaps," ere we shall meet again.
 We both are in the balance weigh'd for death,
 "You in the sinking scale that's near the grave,
 "And I hang tottering here, in hopes to follow."

Nor. By Mercy, that still guards the thrones of
 princes,

The queen, nay, Morton, ne'er can be so cruel.
 What, shed the blood, the sacred blood of kings?
 'Twere blasphemy unpardon'd to suspect it.
 "But if she dare, I will myself descend,
 "Arm'd with a legion in the shades below,
 "Guarding like gods, the utmost fort of life,
 "And drive your lovely spirit back, to be
 "Inshrin'd within this sacred mould again."

Qu. M. Oh, duke! “are you so cruel and unkind?”
 I had but two priz’d friends in all the world, 100
 The queen and you; and she forbids me earth,
 Will you deny me heaven?

Nor. Away! your danger spurs me on the race;
 Swift as the mind can think my soul shall fly,
 And make the scaffold but one step to heaven.

Qu. M. And till I come, your happiness to see
 Kneel, and atone th’ offended Powers for me.

Nor. Oh, doubt it not! One last farewell——
 Yes, all the shining host shall plead your cause;
 Round the ætherial throne Queen Mary’s wrongs
 Shall be the theme of their immortal songs;
 Whilst for revenge their crystal trumpets sound,
 ’Till their shrill voice to frightened mortals bound;
 The stars shall shake, the elements be aw’d,
 And both the globes shall feel th’ avenging rod.

“*Qu. M.* No more;
 “Our souls shall soon a joyful meeting have;
 “But to our mortal parts, a long farewell.”

[*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE II.

An Alcove, with a table, pen, ink, paper, and chairs.

Enter Queen ELIZABETH and ladies.

Qu. El. A midnight silence sits upon the morn,
 The eye of day shuts, as afraid already, 120

And seems the setting, not the rising sun.
I want no glories that the world can give;
Crowns on my head, and kingdoms at my nod:
Yet where's the quiet, where's the freedom here?

Enter CECIL and DAVISON.

Dav. My lord, I fear we have transgress'd too far
Upon the queen's most private thoughts.

Cec. "Thoughts, or no thoughts, we must and will
awake her.

"Yet hold;" let us retire within hearing,
Till she is pleas'd to call. [Retires.

Qu. El. Norfolk is now no more;
His body's free from pain, his mind from fear,
And feels, like mine, no doleful beatings here.

"Curs'd be this crown, and this loath'd scene of
power,

"And curs'd this head that e'er the magic wore.

"The careless shepherd's breast feels no such sting,

"More lov'd, obey'd, and happier than a king;

"His subjects do not one another hate,

"For malice, or for jealousy of state;

"But harmlessly the ewe and crested ram

"Walk side by side, and guard the tender lamb."

Who's there?

Re-enter DAVISON and CECIL.

Cec. What would your majesty?

Qu. El. Welcome, kind Cecil, to assist me;
Welcome, I hope, to rid this breast of tortures.

What say the council to their queen's demand?
Shall my dear sister live? Shall I be happy?
Speak, Davison, and tell your mistress' doom;
Quick, for my soul now starts to meet the sound.

Dav. May't please your majesty, your faithful
council,

To what you urg'd, that mercy should be shewn
To one of Mary's dignity and sex,
And near relation both in blood and title to you;
They humbly offer, that no sex nor greatness,
Nay, were they sprung from the same royal father,
Ought to protect offenders 'gainst their sovereign;
And boldly tell you, mercy is a crime,
When it is shewn to one that has no mercy.
"She would have ta'en your life,
"Which is not safe as long as Mary lives,
"Whom if you save, in hope that Heav'n will spare
you, 160
"'Tis not to trust to mercy, but provoke it."

Qu. El. Is this the censure then, of your most wise
And arbitrary caution?

Dav. Mightiest queen!

Do not mistake what is your subjects' love;
Our only zeal is for your royal safety,
To whom one precious moment of your welfare,
Is far more worth than all our lives and fortunes.

Cec. To that objection of your majesty,
That this may draw a war from France or Spain,
We all agree, with one entire consent,
If any such should be, to guard your crown

And royal person with our lives and fortunes;
And such fond fears are held impossible,
For they can ne'er hurt England, but by her;
And all such danger's at her death will vanish.

Qu. El. Is this your answer to your sov'reign's tears?
This all the kindness that two queens can beg?

Dav. All fix'd, and firm as fate, we are resolv'd,
Like rocks, to stand the tempest of vain pity, 180
Since to deny you this is to be loyal:

And t' assuage the tyrant, Mercy, in your bosom,
No other answer we can give but this:

“ I kneel, and humbly offer to your thinking,

“ A saying no less true to be observ'd,

“ Than once was said of Conradine of Sicily,

“ And Charles of Anjou, rivals in a crown,”

Which is—the death of Mary is the life

Of queen Elizabeth; the life of Mary

The death of queen Elizabeth.

“ *Qu. El.* Hear, you immortal and avenging Powers!

“ Are kings vicegerents of your rule on earth?

“ Breathes the rich oil yet fragrant on our brows,

“ And are we thus oblig'd? There are but two

“ Main attributes which stamp us like yourselves,

“ Mercy and sole prerogative, and those

“ Daring and saucy subjects would deny us.”

Cec. May't please your majesty——

Qu. El. I'll hear no more—“ Hail pious confessor!

“ In vain we sprung from Edward's sacred line;” 200

I from this hour the tyrant will begin,

Throw off the saint, and be no more a queen;

No more be fam'd for merciful abroad,
But turn my sceptre to an iron rod ;
“ For if thou wouldst be great, thou rather must
“ Be fear'd for cruelty than lov'd for just.
“ Hence, and begone ; for I will thunder bring,
[*Ex. Dav. and Cec.*
“ Fell as a woman, awful as a king. [*Going, stops.*
“ What have I done ? With whom shall I advise ?
“ Heaven keeps at awful distance now, and treats not
“ With kings, as it with monarch's did of old,
“ In visions counsell'd, or by prophets warn'd.
“ Inspire my thoughts.”—Bid Davison come back.
How wretched is my fate !
That on each side on ruin I must run,
Or take my sister's life, or lose my own.

Re-enter DAVISON.

Dav. I come at your dread majesty's command.

Qu. El. Oh, Davison ! thou art a man on whom
My daily smiles, like rays, adorn thy person ;
But thou hast merits that outshine my bounties. 220

Dav. Oh, whither would your majesty ?

Qu. El. Thou seest how thy poor queen is tortur'd.
“ 'Tis vain to hide what thou hast eyes to find,
“ How backward I am still to cruelty,
“ How loth to drain the blood ev'n of my foes ;
Is there no way to satisfy my people,
“ Nor jealous power,” but by my sister's death ?

Dav. “ I would advise ;

“ But, oh, what hopes can that physician have

“ Of cure, whose patient throws away his medicine,
 “ And says that is a poison?” Lo, I kneel
 To you, the wisest, justest queen on earth,
 The perfect’st pattern to those pow’rs above :
 “ Yet, Oh! the more y’are good in mercy shine,”
 They seem more fix’d to save such excellence,
 Which cannot be, but by the death of Mary.

Qu. El. “ Screech-owls, dark ravens, and amphi-
 bious monsters,
 “ Are screaming in that voice.” Fly from my sight ;
 “ Run monster, fiend, and seek thy habitation
 “ Where such loathed vermin build their fatal nests,”
 Or sink there to the centre as thou kneel’st, 241
 Rather than that should be. “ Rise, and begone!”

Dav. This shall not fright your slave from his lov’d
 duty,
 Nor from his humble posture; no, unless
 You take this weapon in your royal hand,
 And thrust it in your faithful servant’s breast,
 “ And let out all my blood that’s loyal; yet
 “ When I’m dead, so well you are belov’d,
 “ There’s none of all your subjects but would bless
 you,
 “ Thus kneel, implore, and hug the fate that I had.”
 [Rises.

Qu. El. Begone, quick, Davison, thou fatal charmer,
 Thou subtle mouth of the deluding senate.

Dav. Alas! what ends can your kind people have?
 What private benefit can they propose
 By this queen’s death, but to preserve your reign;

Which is the all, and only blessing aim'd at ?
Believe, consider.

Qu. El. Oh, Davison !

Dav. Remember too your danger—news is brought,
That Spain has an armada launch'd, so vast, 260
That o'er our narrow seas will form a bridge
To let in all their forces to this island,
With iron rods to scourge, and chains to bind us.
“ Th' affrighted people hasten to their shores,
“ And scarcely can perceive a cloud far off,
“ Dark'ning the sky, and blackening all the sea,
“ But cry, the armada's coming.”

Qu. El. Vain reports !

Dav. Upon this dreadful rumour, strange alarm,
I heard it run in whispers through the house,
“ And all the lords that sat upon the queen,”
That this invasion was for Mary's sake ;
And if you will not sign her speedy death,
They must be forc'd to fly, or set up her,
In hopes, that when she reigns, that prosp'rous act
May expiate their crime in judging her.

Qu. El. Ha !

Dav. 'Tis most true ; can you condemn them for't ?
Sign but the warrant, stay the execution,
And then, perhaps, your subjects, when they find
How much their queen did condescend for them, 281
May soon relent, and with submissive tears
Request that life which you so long had begg'd
“ In vain of them.”

Qu. El. I have consider'd——Write——

Dav. Write what?

Qu. El. Write what thou wilt; write any thing;
A warrant for Queen Mary's execution—
Queen, did I say?

Dav. Oh, good angels bless you!
Nay, children, whom you've now redeem'd from
slaughter,

May live to the full age of man, and sing
Your praise.

Qu. El. Did I say queen?
Shall the "fierce" hand of curs'd Elizabeth
Condemn to die her cousin, and a queen?
Dispatch, and let thy pen fly o'er the paper,
Swift as the quill upon an eagle's wing;
For if thou giv'st my thoughts one moment for re-
pentance,

Hadst thou the tongue, the eloquence of angels, 300
It were in vain to alter my resolve—

Write, write, no matter how; if foul, the better;
Foul as the fact I am about to do. [*Dav. writes.*]

Dav. See, I've already done.

Qu. El. Quick, quick, it must. [*Reads.*]

"To the lieutenant of the Tower, commanding, that
the next morning, after sight of this, you shall de-
liver to our sheriffs of London, the body of your
prisoner, Mary Stewart."

Oh, cruel Davison! when thou cam'st here,
Tears should have flow'd much faster than thy ink,
And drown'd her name with rivers from thy eyes.

[*Reads.*] “To be beheaded on a scaffold fix’d without the Tower.”

And I to this must sign Elizabeth.

Quick, give my roving thoughts no time for reason;

But thou, successful devil, put the pen

Into my hand, and hell into my bosom.

Dav. Consider that it is of no more force
Than testaments, that may at any time, 320
The party living, be revok’d and null’d.

Qu. El. There, there it is. [*Signs it.*
Yet stay; be sure thou keep’st it as thou would’st
Thy soul and body from eternal fires.
Think, when I put into thy hands this paper,
’Tis not the life of Mary, but thy queen’s;
The moment that thou part’st with this dead warrant,
May the just statesman be thy fortune still,
And all thy good rewarded be with ill;
Tho’ honest, may’st thou be a villain thought,
And die a traitor for thy prince’s fault.

[*Exit Queen Elizabeth.*
Dav. The deed is done at last.

Enter MORTON and CECIL.

Cec. Hast thou got the paper?

Dav. ’Tis in my hand.

Mor. Victorious Davison!

“Eternal ages shall adore thy statue,

“And wise historians, when this deed they note,

“Shall lift thy name among the stars for this.”

Cec. Giv't me.

Dav. But had you heard what execrations—— 340

Cec. Oh, no matter! ours be all the blame;
We'll carry to the joyful council this.
To-morrow she shall die, and the queen rest,
“When this hugg'd cancer's parted from her breast.”

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Soft music here. A table at the upper end of the stage.

Queen MARY discovered kneeling, with a book in her hand; her women kneeling by her.

Enter to them DOWGLAS, and men servants.

Dow. Behold her kneeling——Oh, ye immortal
Powers!

Ye Powers that help so good and mild as she,
Send hosts of cherubs down, to waft those sighs!
Sure all the world's remember'd in those prayers,
And in those tears thy guilty foes are wash'd.

Qu. M. Come all of ye, draw near.

[*Queen comes forward.*]

How goes the day.

Dow. The sun's now risen, whose setting you'll
ne'er see.

Qu. M. Suppose I've but an hour of life, that were
enough;

The distance up to heav'n tho't seems so great,

Yet 'tis so nigh, and mercy flies so fast,
That in less while than swiftest lightning falls,
It saves the poor delinquent at the bottom,
That has been ages tumbling to perdition.

Dow. Oh, ye dread fates! ye sovereign guard of
kings!

Must that bright head be snatch'd off by an axe, 360
Upon whose brow's a crown, a sacred crown?

Qu. M. What matters it how we die?

When dead we're all the same; there's no distinction
Betwixt a prince that on his gorgeous bed
Gives up a pamper'd ghost, and "me,"
The poor criminal condemned to die upon
A scaffold; and with that impartial judge,
That holds the steady equal beams of justice,
A crown weighs light with virtue in the balance.

Dow. How d'ye, and how bears that precious heart,
Th' expected moment of its body's fate?

Qu. M. Ne'er better; for my maids can bear me
witness,

I laid me down to rest, and all the night
Slept like a thoughtless infant,
"With smiles imprinted on its lovely cheeks,"
And wak'd with joy to dress me for my travel:
"Like one who on a may-day morn sets out,
"Pleas'd with the beauties of the lawns and fields,
"And hopes to come into his inn at night."

Dow. Oh, miracle of innocence! 380

Qu. M. Thou, Dowglas,

"Art young, may'st live my story to relate

“ To men that now are children in the womb;
 “ But, Melvil, thou hast been long my faithful servant,”
 Haste into France and Scotland when I’m dead,
 There tell the Guises, my dear cousins, and son,
 Thou saw’st me die in the true faith I liv’d in;
 Nor Scotland’s crown, nor England’s hopes could
 tempt me,

Nor eighteen years a pris’ner, to apostatize;
 Nay, nor my life, which now I seal its martyr.

Dow. Oh, saint-like goodness!

Qu. M. Ye have been faithful all;
 What poor estate my cruel wants have left me,
 (Here is my will) I freely giv’t among you;
 [Gives a paper.

Would it were more, as much as you deserve:
 Nay, weep not; here are some few trifles,
 I will distribute with my own glad hands:
 Here is some gold and jewels in this casket,
 Share them among ye, and a kiss to each. 399

[To her women.

Heaven bless you all!—Thou, Melvill; take this ring;
 I would not have thee, every time thou look’st on’t,
 But sometimes, call to mind that it was Mary’s—
 Poor man! his griefs have choak’d his speech.

[To Dowglas.

Receive this bracelet from thy mistress’ arm,
 “ And tie’t about thy wrist.”—Go to my son,
 The rising sun, from Mary’s endless setting,
 And he’ll take care of thee, and all of ye.

Dow. Alas, I quickly shall be past all care!

This fatal day hangs heavier on my youth,
Than threescore years can do on Dowglas' head.

Qu. M. I've nothing else to give, but, after me,
Joys in reversion.

Dow. 'Twill not be long ere you will shine a star,
And light us on our way.

Qu. M. Give me some wine——Your mistress here
bequeaths

Her last kind wishes to you in this draught.

I have no friends, no children nigh, but you.

“He whom I bore, rack'd from these tender bowels,

“Scarce bless'd his joyful mother, for her labour,

“With his infant beams; but was by villains, 420

“Like little Romulus, from this bosom torn,

“And nurst with wolves. Wherefore, my dearest
friends,”

My faithful, suffering, mourning, weeping servants!

Your queen, your mistress, drinks to every one;

And all revenge and malice bury'd be

In this kind bowl, as is this wine in me.

[*Drinks, all kneel.*

Dow. Give me the cup——Here's to our mistress;

[*Turns about, puts poison in the cup, and drinks.*

And to her health of immortality,

And mine. Behold, they come to fetch you.

Qu. M. They are welcome——

*Enter CECIL, MORTON, lieutenant of the Tower, and
guards.*

My lord, I have expected you with joy:

You find me like a cheerful, longing bride :
Come, and conduct me to my bridegroom, Death.

Cec. Alas, I must !

Qu. M. Bring you no message from the queen ?
Nor word of farewell to her dying cousin ?

Cec. Something she would have said ; but burst in
tears ;

While with a groan her tortur'd speech expir'd,
And only cry'd, Oh, Mary ! and no more. 439

Mor. Madam, I kneel, in hopes of your forgiveness.

Qu. M. Thou'st done no ill to me, but as thy nature .
A wolf can do but as a wolf——thou hast it.
Tho' heaven thy horrid crimes may ne'er forget ;
But let my son revenge his father's murder,
Which thou too surely didst, and laidst the stain on me.

Enter DAVISON in haste.

Dav. I have strange and sudden news to tell you ;
Just now's arrived from Scotland Patrick Grey,
With letters to the queen, which have disturb'd her ;
But more, my lord, she seem'd incens'd at you.

[*To Morton.*

I wish this execution had been done,
Or not to do.

Cec. We are gone too far already,
To think of going back.

Dav. Room for the queen,
Madam, 'tis fit you would dismiss your servants ;
The scaffold will be crowded else.

Qu. M. The queen, my sister, cannot be so cruel.

Shall this poor body, when its light is out,
“ (Which princesses were, kneeling, proud to deck),”
Its bashfulness without a blush expos’d, 460
And none of all my friends at last allow’d
To weep, and shrowd these limbs when I am dead,
Which these poor wretches all will thank you for!

Cec. Madam, tho’ against the orders of our mistress,
Two of your women servants shall attend you,
And of your men the like, which best shall please you,
Now have you aught that we may tell the queen?

Qu. M. I have but one request, that she’ll permit
My friends to bear my body into France.
There to be bury’d with my ancestors
Of Lorrain, whence my mother was descended;
For, Scotland, thou that never gav’st me quiet
When I was living, ne’er shall rest me dead.

Dav. On then, make way there!

Qu. M. Come near, and you two take me by the
hands;

For, to the last, with decency I will,
“ Tho’ little pert,” the majesty retain
Of what I am, the rightful queen of Scotland,
Queen Dowager of France, and England’s heir;
A glorious shine of titles, that would, like 180
The lambent beams around the heads of angels,
Protect a crown——Weep not,
But take me by the hands, as you have seen
Your now expiring, then your blooming queen,
Brought by two monarchs to the dauphin’s arms,
Adorn’d with all love’s pride, and all love’s charms;

So lead me to the place where I may gain
Immortal pleasures, and immortal reign.

[Exit led by two gentlemen.]

Manent MORTON and DOWGLAS.

Mor. Why dost thou weep and grovel on the floor?

Dow. Traitor, because I will not herd with men.

[Faints and lies down.]

'Tis nobler thus to crawl, like snakes and toads,
Than live, and have a face erect like thee.

Mor. Alas, thou faint'st!

Dow. Hold off thy cursed hands—I am resolv'd
My royal mistress shall not fall alone,
But, hand in hand, the joyful course we'll run.
Attend, ye bright inhabitants on high,
Whilst I proclaim th' imperial saint is nigh:
Now, now she starts, and now begins the race,
And now with blushings veils her charming face;
The lovely pillar that sustains her head, 501
Her snowy neck now on the block is laid;
Tears in vast torrents flow from every eye,
And groans, like thunder, rend the vaulted sky:
The axe is up, and points the way to heaven—
Now, now it falls, and now the stroke is given. *[Dies.]*

Enter Queen ELIZABETH, and attendants.

Qu. El. Speak, Morton, traitor to thy sovereign,
Yet give me comfort, and I'll pardon all:
Where is the queen? Say, does my sister live?
Where is she?

Mor. Dead, ere this, upon the scaffold.

Qu. El. “Now, who will swiftest run to save both queens?”

Fly faster than the rushing thought *to save her*.

“And he that from the lifted axe the dove

“Can save, shall be a king.

“Vanish; a kingdom’s thy reward.”

Seize on that fiend; truth hath at last been kind,

And brought to light ’twas he that murder’d Darnley.

Bind him in chains, and in an iron cage,

Let him be sent to Scotland to be tortur’d——

[*Exit Mor. dragged away.*]

Ha! what unthought-of dismal object’s this!

“A second prospect, sure, of grief to none;”

The pretty, innocent, and faithful Dowglas,

Dead with no other wound than sorrow’s dart,

Or some unhappy poison.

Enter CECIL and DAVISON.

Cec. Madam, I wish the ransom of our lives
Could save the queen’s, or mediate our offence,
If you shall think it so, for she is dead.

Qu. El. How could’st thou be so curs’d a villain!
What boots the thunder, or the bolts of kings,
Which traitors fear no more than summer’s hail,
Else why art thou alive, and why dy’d Mary so?

Cec. Alas!

Qu. El. Remove that vulture from my sight; and
since
Death cannot reach him, the star-chamber shall

“ Strip him of all his borrow’d plumes, and leave him
“ As naked as he came into the world.”

Dav. Long may you live, till heav’n at last makes
known

The good that I’ve, so ill-rewarded, done. [Exit.

Qu. El. “ Oh, take away those sad remains for ever!”
Thy dust shall have a royal monument;
High as thy friendship shall the marble rise,
And, with thy soul, thy tomb shall reach the skies.

[They take off Dowglas.

Cec. Oh, calm that bosom! let no grief
Molest your quiet spirit in its god-like mansion.

Qu. El. Oh, Cecil, shall I never be at rest?
We are but gaudy executioners at best:
Fix’d to our crowns, we bear the galling weight
Of censuring fools, and flattering knaves of state;
If we forgive, our pity is arraign’d,
If punish, we with crimes are stain’d.
In some wild desert happier ’tis to reign
O’er wolves and tygers, than more cruel men.
Hence with vain glories! I’ll no more contend,
Trust not in greatness, nor on crowns depend,
When virtue is alone our surest friend.

[Exeunt.

THE END.

EPILOGUE.

SPOKEN BY JO. HAINES.

WHO could have ever thought to have seen me
Tack'd to the end of a deep tragedy?
They might as well have dress'd me out to dance,
Or sent me an ambassador to France.
Yet I am forc'd to come; for, say my masters,
Your phiz will bring us off from all disasters.
Now, you must know, I thought a beau might be
A better suppliant for a tragedy;
His pretty face, his dimple, and his smile,
Might many tender ladies' hearts beguile.
But, nolens volens, Pricky must appear;
And—what am I to say, now I'm come here?
Oh, I'm to tell you, that the players say,
Unless you kindly do receive this play,
There's above half of them will loose their pay.
Nay, more, the poet too will lose his gains,
Unless you're pleas'd to smile upon Count Haines.
Let me not sue in vain, you shining sphere,
Nor you, my pit-friends, that to me are dear;
My middle-gallery friends will sure assist me,
And for the upper tier they never miss'd me.
Then let your hearty wishes all be shewn,
To give the Albion Queens their just renown.

Banks, John,

The Albion Queen ...

London 1791

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